■ BUSINESS / B1

Jan-Oct. balance of payments posts surplus of $2.324B

■ NEWS / A2

New fighting erupts in Jolo: Gov't troops vs Abu, Misuari group

■ METRO / A23

Spaghetti downs 22 partygoers in suspected food poisoning

■ WORLD / A10

China reports 1st human bird flu infection; 53 birds die in Britain

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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'Ready for the world!?' Ad Congress opens today

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

CEBU CITY—ADVERTISING INDUSTRY LEADers tackle the country's competitiveness to meet the global market challenge at the start of the 19th Philippine Advertising Congress here today.

Some 3,000 people, including marketing

READY/ A8

Erap: Ateneo taught me not to cheat, lie or steal

By Fe Zamora

AS A WOMAN IN THE AUdience shouted "Hello Garci," former President Joseph Estrada said in a message to his Ateneo classmates celebrating a

ERAP/ A22

TALAGA LANG, HA?

DOJ chief accused of coddling six GIs

Gonzalez put them under US custody, says lawyer

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza *in Manila* **and Tonette Orejas,** *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NO LESS THAN JUSTICE SECretary Raul Gonzalez is protecting the American servicemen accused of raping a 22-year-old Filipino woman, ordering them to be placed under the custody of the US Embassy immediately upon its request, lawyer Katrina Legarda said yesterday.

The only government agency left caring for the rape victim is the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

"We are involved here because it is the DSWD's mandate to provide services to abused children and women. We'll just focus on the psycho-social well-being of the victim and the family," said Social Welfare Secretary Luwalhati Pablo.

Legarda, counsel for the woman allegedly raped by six servicemen on Nov. 1 at the Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales, said Gonzalez received a call from a US Embassy attaché early on Nov. 2.

"On the basis of that call, the DOJ secretary ordered the Olongapo fiscal to turn the US servicemen over to the US Embassy," Legarda told the INQUIRER.

Because of the turnover, prosecutors failed to conduct an inquest immediately and police were unable to arrest and detain the servicemen who had participated in the recent RP-US counterterrorism exercises in the Philippines, the lawyer said.

During inquest, the prosecutor determines probable cause against the accused immediately after the commission of a crime.

"It seems to me that the DOJ is out to protect the Americans. There was no intent to

DOJ CHIEF/ A21

5/11: FIVE OF THE "HYATT 10," ex-DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman, and in a rare public appearance since her resignation in July, ex-Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, huddle at the start of a forum at the Ateneo School of Government titled "On Debts and Deficits, Is There a Way Out?" Behind them are ex-Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Ging Deles, ex-Trade Secretary Juan Santos and ex-Education Secretary Butch Abad. *(Story on Page A6.)*

EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA House allies scramble to cover up Garci report

By Michael Lim Ubac

IT APPEARS THAT PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo is going to get away unscathed again in what may well be the second chapter in the continuing drama in the House of Representatives over fraud allegations in last year's presidential election.

Ms Arroyo's dominant allies yesterday sought to scuttle findings in the draft report of the chairs of five House committees that conducted a joint inquiry into the "Hello Garci" scandal that the administration attempted to cover up revelations that she manipulated the balloting.

Discussions in an executive session of the committees that was called to approve the draft report ended in a deadlock.

"Certainly, we will not agree that there was a cover-up," said Rep. Eduardo Zialcita of Lakas-CMD.

The Parañaque congressman said he and his colleagues in the committees would push for an emphasis in the final report that the alleged wiretapping of telephone conversations purportedly between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was part of an attempt to oust her.

Added Rep. Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur:

"The draft report is not yet final and may be subject to a great amount of change. In fact, administration solons have wanted to emphasize that the Hello Garci tapes were sourced from manufactured products that were spliced and used in a conspiracy to oust the President."

Rep. Salacnib Baterina of Ilocos Sur and Rep. Monico Puentevella shared the views of Zialcita and Macarambon.

"Our people are growing tired over these recycled issues designed to weaken the President. Why don't we all just help each other to move this country forward?" Baterina said.

"We feel the facts warrant more emphasis on the conspiracy angle," said Puentevella, Lakas-Bacolod.

Reprising their roles in the emotional debates that marked the high-profile inquiry, Malacañang allies pointed out that

GMA HOUSE/ A21

Teary Dinky says sorry to the public

By Fe Zamora and Christine O. Avendaño

RESIGNED SOCIAL WELFARE SECREtary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman yesterday apologized to the people for betraying their trust when she was part of the administration's all-out campaign to make President Macapagal-Arroyo win over Fernando Poe Jr. in the 2004 elections.

"I have come to realize that my actions as a public servant at my time in the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) has its good points. But during the campaign, in my fear that another actor will become president, Mr. Fernando Poe Jr., I was

TEARY/ A21

1.2M Meralco customers to pay ₱108 more per month

By Abigail L. Ho

MORE THAN 1.2 MILLION CUSTOMERS of the Manila Electric Co. consuming 200 kilowatt-hours (kWh) a month will each shell out an additional P108.35 because of the implementation of the 10-percent expanded value-added tax (VAT), according to the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Instead of their current electricity bill of P1,554, they will pay P1,662.35, an increase of 6.97 percent. Households consuming 200 kWh a month represent 31.8 percent of Meralco's customers in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces.

Electricity and petroleum products were previously exempt from VAT.

Next year, consumer will pay more for electricity not only because the VAT rate will be raised by 2 percentage points to 12 percent, but also because of higher rates to be charged by National Power Corp. (Napocor).

The ERC is set to approve next month two applications that will allow Napocor to recover its fuel and foreign exchange costs from October 2004 to March 2005.

In a briefing, ERC Chair Rodolfo Al-

1.2M MERALCO/ A22

GMA weighed exit scenarios in September

By Norman Bordadora

EVEN AFTER THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTAtives voted to dismiss the impeachment case against her, President Macapagal-Arroyo was reportedly contemplating an exit scenario involving resignation or filing a leave of absence, as well as power-sharing with the opposition, "creeping governance" and a possible "revolt within."

SPECIAL REPORT

The President's supposed state of mind is reflected in the marginal notes on a "political security situationer" prepared by her security advisers and titled "New Threats to Philippine Democracy." The paper marked "confidential" and dated Sept. 9 is believed to have been presented to the Cabinet in a briefing on Oct. 5.

"It's clear from the annotations ... that for all the signs of madness, she has a clear idea of the situation she's in," said former Sen. Francisco Tatad, who furnished the INQUIRER a copy of the document containing the marginal notes.

Tatad said that he had obtained the annotated document from a "friendly source" in Malacañang. He quoted the source as saying that the President dictated the handwritten notes to a secretary after the briefing.

"To her credit, she knows that she's on the way out... Notably, that she has lost support,"

GMA CONSIDERED/ A8

Transsexual Pinoys find love, work in Japan

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

(First of three parts)

SAITAMA, JAPAN—ON STAGE, KEI RODriguez looks and moves like a supermodel.

SPECIAL REPORT

So it comes as no surprise that at least 10 ¥1,000 notes clipped between chopsticks are waved in her direction by appreciative guests of the Tres Bien Stage Club in this prefecture next to Tokyo.

The mostly middle-aged men and women who frequent the small club in the basement of a three-story building near the train station just love the way Kei moves.

And they don't seem to care that up until five years ago, she was a man.

Kei is one of an estimated 100 transsexual Filipinos who have found acceptance and a

TRANSSEXUAL/ A8

GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER

WHEN LIFE IS A CARNIVAL. 300 orphans from the White Cross, a charity institution, are the special guests at the grand lighting ceremony of the Greenhills Shopping Center moving display on Wednesday. With a Christmas carnival theme, the extravaganza is the work of engineers and decorators of the COD Department Store in Cubao, now defunct.

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: At 2 p.m. yesterday, tropical storm Pepeng was estimated at 640 km east northeast of Legaspi, Albay with maximum sustained winds of 85 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 100 kph. It was forecast to move northwest at 7 kph.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/11/17/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

New fighting erupts in Jolo

By Donna Z. Pazzibugan and Julie S. Alipala, Edwin O. Fernandez and Nash B. Maulana, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FRESH HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT IN JOLO YESTERDAY following a brief lull as the Abu Sayyaf and Misuari Breakaway Group launched a mortar attack on government troops near the town of Panamao.

The barrage of mortar fire hit civilian areas, destroying a newly renovated mosque and houses near Panamao, the military Southern Command said.

Armed Forces Chief Gen. Generoso Senga said the armed group which last week engaged government troops in Indanan town in the heaviest fighting in Sulu since February, were "regrouping" for fresh attacks.

"Our troops are still pursuing the groups there. We have secured most of the area. Pursuit operations are going on. But the enemy is also regrouping in their strongholds, so I think the operation will proceed in the next few days," Senga said yesterday.

Military officials believe they may be dealing with the same group they engaged last February, a combined force of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group and former Moro National Liberation Front rebels identified with detained MNLF chair Nur Misuari.

There were no reported casualties from the fresh wave of hostilities, and the Army Scout Ranger battalion said they overran another bandit encampment, the third to fall since the military launched a major offensive on Nov. 11.

"A few rounds of mortar were delivered towards the position of our soldiers but I think these are only three or four rounds of ammunition. I think these are just harassing fires," Senga said.

No new government casualties were reported.

Fighting temporarily ceased on Tuesday, with the military putting the death toll at four on their side and at least 20 from the Abu Sayyaf and the so-called Misuari Breakaway Group (MBG).

At least four Marines were killed while 12 Marines and 10 Army soldiers were wounded in four gun battles with the Abu Sayyaf that began late Friday in Indanan town, where most of the fighting was concentrated.

About 17 bandits were believed killed though no bodies have been recovered.

Senga said Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan has not asked for additional troops.

"He said he thinks he has enough forces to play around with," he said.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Aleo, commander of the antiterror Task Force Comet in Sulu, said there were enough forces in Jolo, but added that air support could be called in soon.

Col. Juancho Sabban, commander of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said it was the Misuari group, led by Ustadz Habier Malik, which launched the attack yesterday on Barangay Siit, where the headquarters of the Marine Battalion Landing Team 4 is located.

"They started it, we just responded," Sabban told the INQUIRER.

Sabban said no civilian was hurt "despite the inaccurate fire that landed on schools and the communities in the *poblacion* proper."

Most residents have not returned to their homes since Malik launched attacks in Panamao and Indanan towns in February. More than 30 soldiers were killed and at least 70 were wounded in the February fighting.

Col. Domingo Tutaan, Southcom chief of staff, said the attack proved that Malik's group was already desperate.

Malik told the INQUIRER via satellite phone that he was only defending his turf from the military.

Sulu Gov. Benjamin Loong said he was working hard to convince Malik and another MBG leader, Khaid Adjibun, to give way to the military operation against Abu Sayyaf bandits, who might be hiding in their areas.

Adan said the operation now includes all forces fighting against the military in Panamao and Indanan.

He directed Aleo and Sabban to "pound the enemy location once their mortar bases are established."

But several nongovernment organizations and religious groups in Sulu have appealed to the military to stop the operation.

"We are calling for ceasefire because it's the civilians who are affected," said Cocoy Tulawie, spokesperson of the Concerned Citizens of Sulu.

Tulawie, a Jolo town councilor, said the hostilities were not helping the province.

"No matter how much you pour for development if fighting continues, it's useless, there should be ceasefire. Besides, Jolo is now overcrowded with internally displaced persons," Tulawie said.

Adan rejected Tulawie's call saying the military "encourages surrender, but no to ceasefire."

Tutaan said the military would never give in to calls for ceasefire, "because we are dealing here with criminals, murderers and terrorists."

A report from the Sulu Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council to the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao indicated that the hostilities have also spread to Panglima Estino town.

The Southcom reported that 470 families have since fled their homes in Indanan to avoid the fighting. A man and his wife were reportedly wounded by sharpnel, the only civilian casualties reported so far.

Loong said the number of displaced families since the hostilities began in Panamao and Indanan towns has reached almost 1,000.

Gov't panel says MILF turf clear of terror camps

COTABATO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT's peacemaking body has cleared the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) of allegations it was hosting a training camp for members of the Southeast Asian Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist network.

Undersecretary Ramon Santos of the Office of Presidential Assistant on the Peace Process (OPAPP) said during a recent stop here that, as part of peace-building efforts with the MILF, his agency has been going around the camps of the 14-year-old Islamic liberation movement.

These visits, which he termed "ground situational evaluation," included camps in Lanao del Sur where Mount Cararao, supposedly the site of a terrorist training camp, is located.

Asked if there was a training ground for foreign terrorists on Mount Cararao, Santos said, "No."

He would not elaborate, however, saying he had a "gentleman's agreement" with his counterpart in the MILF that any interview should be made at a forum in which all concerned were present.

Reports attributed to intelligence sources in Manila said captured Indonesian terrorists had either trained or conducted training for terrorists on Mount Cararao for bomb attacks in key Philippine cities, including the simultaneous bombings in Davao, General Santos and Makati last Feb 14.

Peace-building

Sec. Zamzamin Ampatuan of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (Napc) said a Muslim-Anti-Poverty Commission had been organized to organize sectoral partnerships to complement the government's peace-building efforts.

Mayor Midpantao Midtimbang of Guindolongan, Maguindanao said local officials and residents were to meet OPAPP officials for the distribution of school supplies to schoolchildren. Guindolongan was the site of military operations in which American troops participating in the recent RP-US military exercises were involved in humanitarian operations.

Meanwhile, the government and the MILF agreed to establish seven more Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Posts (JCMPs) to prevent any conflict that could threaten the peace process.

Santos said the agreement was reached last week when the officials of the government and the MILF also agreed to conduct a local monitoring team assembly next month to evaluate the current ceasefire.

Von Al Haq, MILF's representative on the ceasefire coordinating committee, said the MILF wants a peaceful and substantial agreement that "would stand the test of time and not one signed only for the sake of having an agreement."

Both Santos and Al Haq reiterated the important role being played by the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT) in the implementation of the ceasefire. *Nash B. Maulana and Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Yap lawyer vows to oppose tax case

THE LAWYER OF FORMER Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said yesterday they would "vigorously" oppose the motion for reconsideration filed by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) with the Department of Justice, which dismissed his tax evasion case.

Alexander Poblador also called on the BIR not to blame the DOJ for rendering what is an otherwise fair, just, and equitable ruling.

Poblador issued the press statement in the light of the statement of Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan that the tax evasion case against Yap and his father Domingo was erroneously dismissed by the DOJ.

Yap's lawyer said the DOJ merely relied on the BIR's own evidence, which did not establish the Yaps' personal involvement in the alleged under-valuation of the subject property that their corporation, DHY Realty Corp., purchased from its original owner.

"None of the documentary evidence presented by the BIR showed that the Yaps had a hand in the execution of the deed of sale containing such under-declaration or were the ones who submitted the (deed to the BIR and/or the Register of Deeds for the purpose of transferring the property in the name of DHY Realty," said Poblador.

Poblador said the BIR also failed to refute Yap's sworn testimony that it was actually their former external counsel who handled the registration of the property and consummated the transaction without informing the Yaps about any under-declaration committed.

"Thus, instead of being perpetrators of the offense charged, the Yaps were actually the victims in this process," said Poblador.

Poblador stressed that no harm was caused by the Yaps to the government as DHY Realty was already negotiating in good faith with the BIR to ensure that the government would get its due when the BIR filed the tax evasion case.

He said Yap assured the public that DHY Realty is not a fly-by-night entity and has always followed the rule of law by being a responsible employer and taxpayer.

"DHY Realty is prepared to pay the proper taxes on the transaction after the deficiency assessment proceedings are duly taken by the BIR. We urge the BIR to be fair and strictly follow due process and stop persecuting the Yaps through trial by publicity," said Poblador.

CRISIS TEAM

Defensor gets Palace job offer

By Christine Avendaño

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY MICHAEL Defensor said he has discussed with President Macapagal-Arroyo the possibility of his joining her Palace team although it was not clear yet what position he would actually be given.

Defensor said the position of chief of staff had been "mentioned" in some of the discussions.

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters that he knew nothing about Defensor's being appointed Palace chief of staff.

"I was with the President this morning and no mention was made of this and I suppose this is not accurate," Ermita.

Ermita also pointed out that the President already had a chief of staff, businessman Tomas Alcantara.

In a phone interview, Defensor said he and Ms Arroyo began talking about his joining her Palace team five months ago, or even before he was confirmed as environment secretary by the congressional Commission on Appointments.

"I offered to help because I felt a crisis would happen and I wanted to be in the forefront," he said.

The last time he and the President talked about it was when he shared a plane ride with her to Cebu a month ago.

But if he is to have a new role in the Palace, Defensor said he wanted it defined to avoid any turf wars.

In a news briefing, Ermita said he knew there was a "clamor" for Defensor to "stay on at DENR."

"Because of the concerns of those in the mining sector, they feel that Mike is doing very well in the implementation of the Supreme Court decision on the mining law and maybe it might disrupt the government program, particularly mining, if he is moved out of DENR," Ermita said.

He said that as Ms Arroyo's chief of staff, Alcantara role was basically to assist her "on matters that the President ask him to do for her on her behalf, or things that are not mainstream or routinary matters of governance."

The role of chief of staff is different from that of executive secretary, Ermita added.

He noted that he was in charge of "all things in the administration and bureaucracy" while Alcantara's job involved "personal things" that the President wanted him to do or follow up.

"It's a very personal assignment, function and task," Ermita said of Alcantara's job.

He on the other hand was in charge of 238 agencies, bureaus and instrumentalities, Ermita said.

A Palace official, meanwhile, confirmed that there had indeed been talks between the President and Defensor on the latter's possibly taking on the job of chief of staff.

The official, who asked not to be named, said that it was "highly possible" that the President would appoint Defensor.

The official said there would be a "minor revamp in the Cabinet" but this would take place in January 2006.

The same source said that the objective of appointing Defensor as chief of staff was to "inject more dynamism in the Office of the President."

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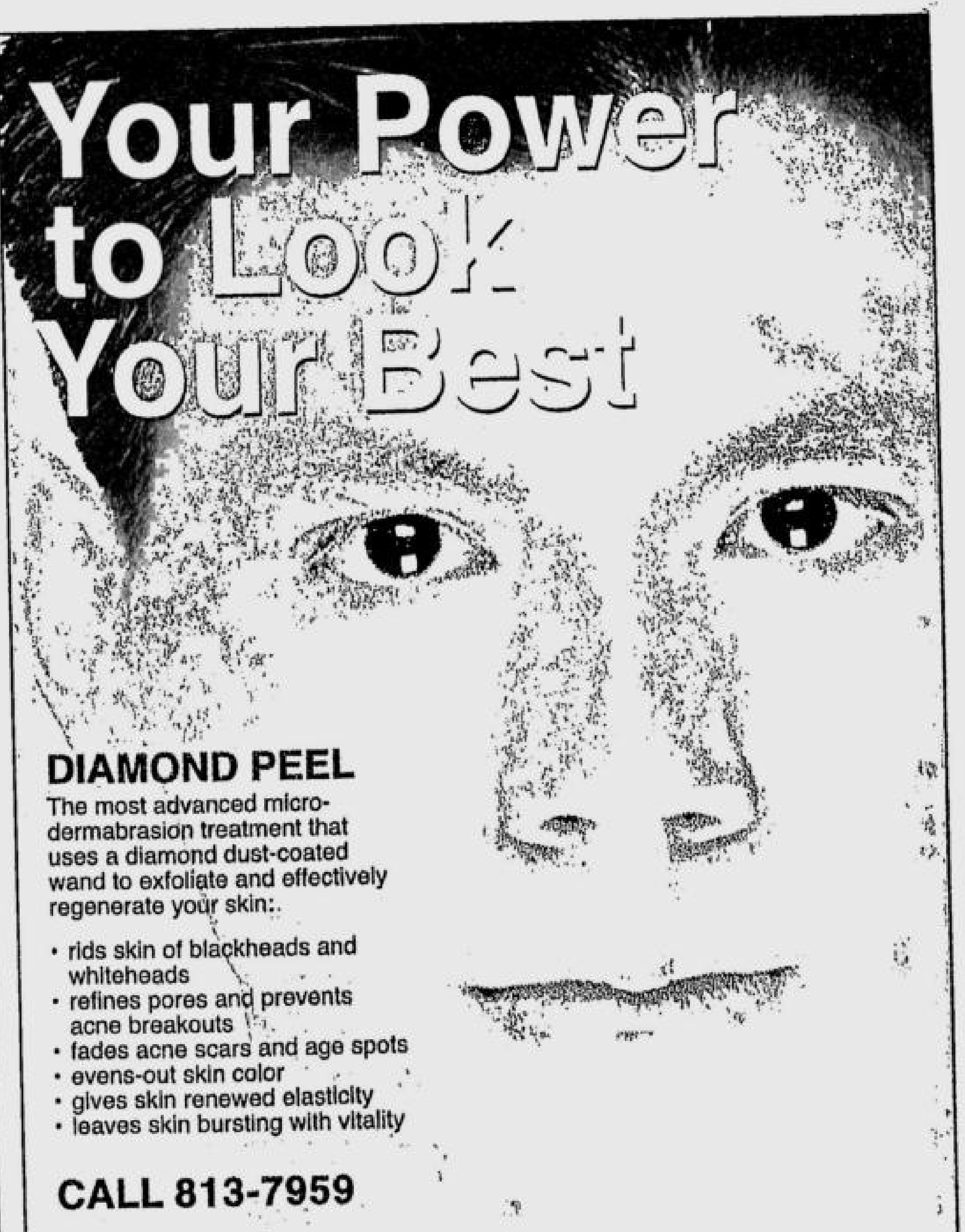
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TMG wraps up 'shootout' probe

By Luige A. del Puerto

UNDER PRESSURE FROM HIGHER-ups to wrap up the inquiry, the Traffic Management Group has concluded its investigation into the killing of three carjacking suspects on Nov. 7 by TMG officers.

But the police leadership has refused to release the TMG's findings to the media despite repeated assurances last week that it would make the report public.

Instead, Director General Arturo Lomibao, the Philippine National Police chief, tossed the TMG report to the PNP's Internal Affairs Service with orders for the IAS to "validate" it and conduct its own investigation.

LOMIBAO

He also ordered members of the TMG body not to divulge the contents of its report.

Police had claimed that the three men were carjackers who were killed in a shootout with pursuing TMG officers. However, a video showing plainclothes policemen firing at the suspects as they lay slumped in their car raised doubts they may have been summarily executed.

"The call of the times is to speed up the investigation so as not to unduly affect other ongoing operations, and to have a more thorough and exhaustive investigation by an independent body," Lomibao said in a statement.

Inspector General Alexis Canonizado, who heads the IAS, said an independent and more exhaustive inquiry would start rolling within days.

He said the IAS would immediately convene a panel to be headed by IAS-NCR chief Senior Supt. Joselito Casugbo.

The IAS reports directly to the the PNP chief. It investigates alleged wrongdoing of police officers and has powers to recommend dismissal or suspension.

Chief Inspector Joseph Orsos, the TMG spokesperson, said the TMG report drew heavily from the findings of the PNP crime laboratory which earlier declared that, based on the evidence, the incident was a shootout and not a rubout.

But he said the report did not make any recommendations for or against the 10 officers involved in the operation.

Orsos said the TMG would have wanted more time to conduct the probe but "higher headquarters" was pressing for it to end the inquiry.

He also admitted that the TMG concluded its probe without seeing an unedited copy of the video taken by a UNTV unit that showed plainclothesmen shooting at the suspects.

A second video clip showed two officers who appeared to be tinkering with something inside the car, suggesting they may have been planting evidence.

The PNP crime laboratory said suspects Anton Cu-Unjieng and Brian Anthony Dulay tested positive for gunpowder residue but the third man in the car, Francis Manzano, did not.

The 9mm pistol in the car also tested positive for powder residue, which meant it had been fired.

Three shells found in the crime scene matched the 9mm pistol found in the car, the crime laboratory said.

Orsos remarked that a lot of weight was given to the crime lab findings as these were objective evidence.

He questioned whether the UNTV video footage could be considered objective evidence.

He said he was inclined to believe that the police operation was legitimate and that no procedural lapses were committed by the TMG officers.

"We can defend whatever we wrote there," Orsos said of the TMG report.

Canonizado said he had yet to thoroughly read the 17-page TMG report.

Asked what the difference would be between a TMG and IAS investigations, Canonizado said the TMG's probe was merely that of a "fact-finding committee (created) to suit their own purposes, which was to say the operation was legitimate."

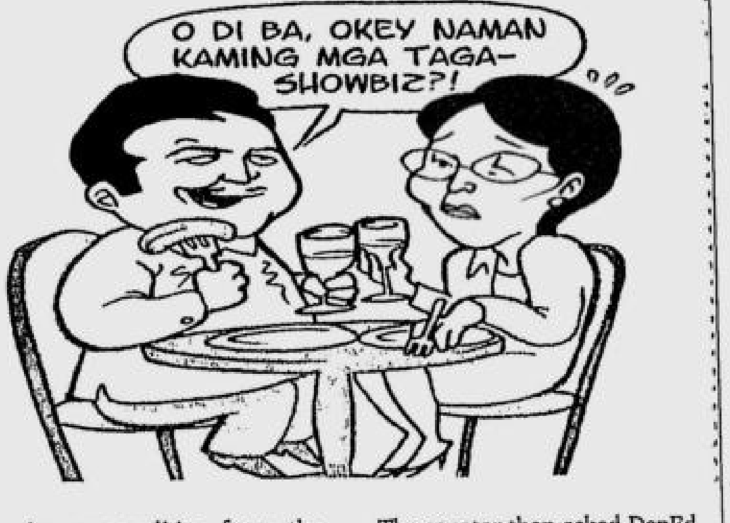
"We will interview alleged eyewitnesses, look into the video footages, and gather other independent information," he said.

No deadline has been set because new information and eye witnesses were still emerging, Canonizado said.

The other members of the panel are lawyer Neopito Perilla of the IAS legal division and Senior Insp. Renato Marasigan, deputy chief of the IAS intelligence division.

Jinggoy grills DepEd exec, then treats her to lunch

By Juliet Labog-Javellana


O DI BA, OKEY NAMAN KAMING MGA TAGA-SHOWBIZ?!

SEN. JINGGOY ESTRADA shook hands with Catanduanes Schools Division Superintendent Thelma Bueson and then treated the apologetic education official to lunch yesterday – after giving her the third degree for trying to teach young children not to vote for actors or sportsmen when they grow up.

During the Senate's hearing on the Department of Education's 2006 budget, Estrada confronted Bueson about her 2004 directive on instilling patriotism that pupils be taught that they should not vote actors, actresses and basketball players for senator, vice president and president.

Bueson, who had been summoned from Catanduanes specifically to answer for her directive, fumbled for words and fidgeted in her seat as Estrada grilled her on why she issued the guidelines and why she singled out people in the entertainment industry as not worthy to be voted to high public office.

"Do you ever watch movies?," Estrada asked. Bueson said she had no time for that.

"Is there any actor you like?" he asked. Bueson replied, "Many – you, (Sen. Ramon) Bong Revilla (Jr.) and (Lipa Mayor) Vilma Santos."

Estrada made Bueson read aloud the pertinent portion of her guidelines which said: "When I am already a voter, I will not vote into office actors, actresses, basketball players who do not know their work in Congress because they are not educated for the positions of senator, vice president or president."

Bueson said she cited these personalities as examples because children in the remote villages of Catanduanes, having no access to newspapers, knew only these popular personalities from the broadcast media. She said the only professionals they knew were teachers and parish priests.

Bueson said she has since "realized the impact" of her guidelines and apologized to Estrada and the other senators.

"Your apology is accepted but I'm very, very disturbed why you singled out the members of the entertainment industry. Don't we have any right to serve the people?" Estrada said.

Bueson said she has issued a new instruction to teachers in Catanduanes to either delete or modify the sentence that offended Estrada because she conceded that it was not right.

"Maybe we can (say), 'I will go for persons who have the capability (for public office)," the nervous Bueson said.

But Estrada would not be mollified. He asked about a petition signed by many teachers all over Catanduanes denouncing her for her "abusive, rude, despotic and tyrannical rule."

Bueson replied that those teachers resented on-the-spot evaluations of their performance which she had instituted and wanted to get even with her.

The senator then asked DepEd Officer-in-Charge Fe Hidalgo if Bueson could be relieved pending investigation of the complaints against her. Hidalgo replied she could not do that arbitrarily.

That appeared to have satisfied Estrada because after the hearing, he shook hands with Bueson and took her to lunch at the senators' lounge.

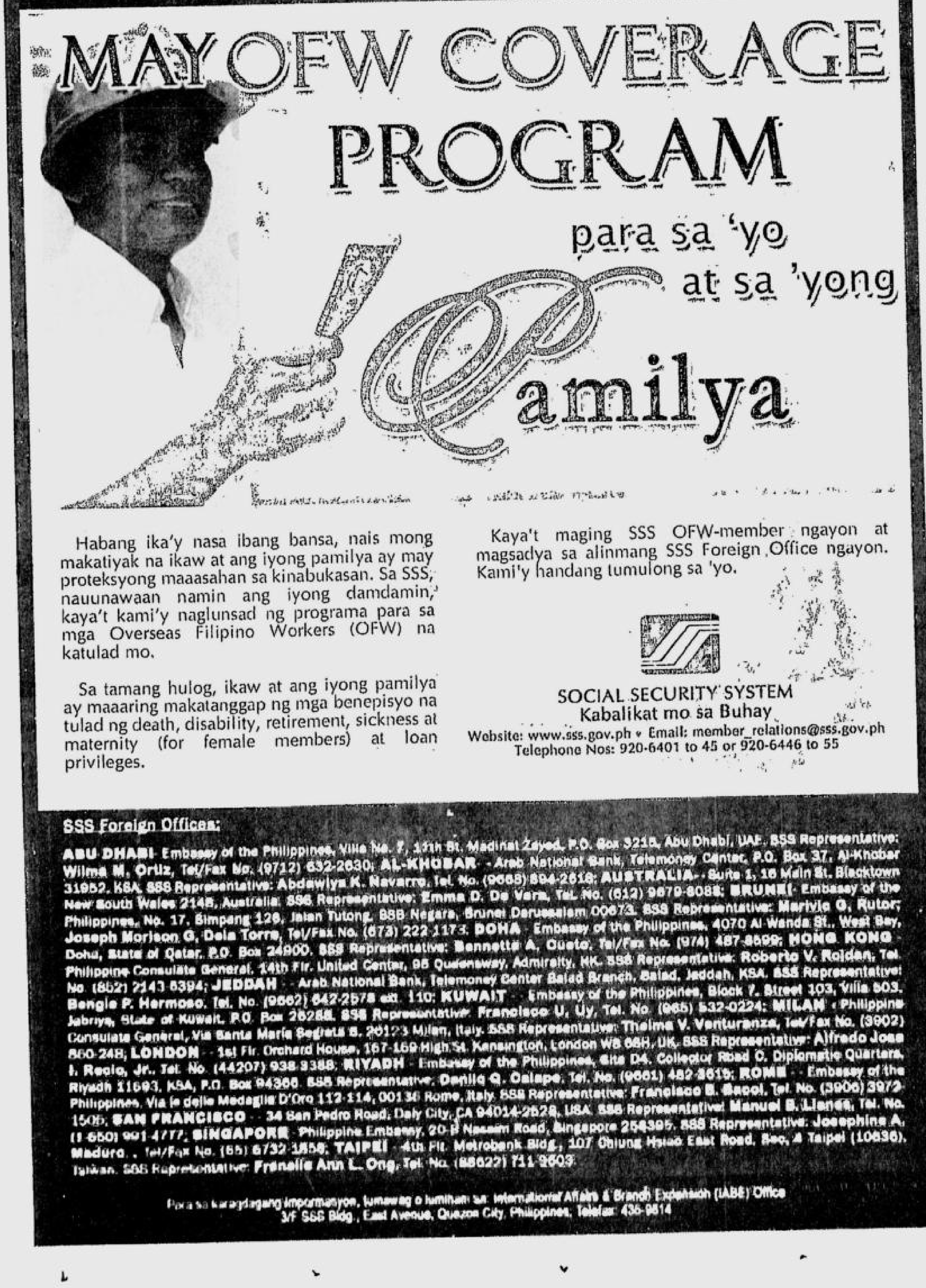
Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. complained that Estrada's long grilling of Bueson took precious time from other senators who wanted to question education officials on the budget.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Bueson need not have apologized, saying some senators tended to be overly sensitive to criticism.

In a statement issued yesterday, Hidalgo said Bueson's memo was about responsible voting but it unintentionally implied that all sports and entertainment personalities have no place in public service.

"This was not her intention. She merely wanted to point out the need for voters to make judgment based on competence rather than popularity," Hidalgo said.

With Alcuin Papa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LEAN RP DELEGATION

GMA off to Busan today for Apec meet

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO leads a "lean" delegation as she flies this afternoon to South Korea for the 13th Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Ms Arroyo is set to leave on board a Philippine Airlines commercial flight PR 416 at 2 p.m. She is expected to arrive in Busan at around 6:45 p.m.

Her delegation includes Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Chief Legal Counsel Merceditas Gutierrez, and Secretary Cerge Remonde, head of the administration's Mass Media Group.

Also joining the President are former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor, head of the APEC Counter-Terrorism Task Force, Undersecretary for International Trade Relations Edsel Custodio, and former Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo.

Roberto Romulo chairs the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) which was created in 1995 to provide advice on the implementation of the Osaka Action Agenda.

In Busan, Ms Arroyo will join Pacific Rim economic leaders for a series of dialogues culminating in the leaders' declaration on Saturday.

A priority of this year's meet is the renewal of the member economies' commitment to the Bogor Goals during the 1994 summit in Indonesia. The agreement calls for free and open trade and investment by 2010 for developed countries and by 2020 for developing ones.

Leaders will also tackle the bird flu problem which health experts warned was poised to develop into a pandemic sooner or later. The virus' deadly H5N1 strain, which has killed at least 64 people in Asia, has crossed to Europe and infected poultry in some countries there.

Another key part of the agenda are counterterrorism proposals and anti-corruption strategies which will be included in the annual APEC forum for the first time.

As of yesterday, Malacañang was still mum on a possible dialogue between Ms Arroyo and United States President George W. Bush.

A bilateral meeting between the two allies is even more anticipated in the wake of the controversy surrounding six US Marine soldiers accused of raping a 22-year-old Filipino woman.

Angela Reyes Iglesia; 45

ANGELA HAYA REYES IGLESIA, daughter of Bernardino C. Reyes Jr., aka Karim Kiram, and National Press Club Vice President Alice Hernandez Reyes, died October 30 at her home in Freehold, New Jersey. She was 45.

A high school graduate of Victoria School Foundation, Angela was a graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Engineering with a degree in industrial engineering and a holder of MBA degree. Known to her friends and family as Gigi, she was until her death due to breast cancer, a vice president of Deutsche Bank in Manhattan, New York.

She is survived by her husband, Rober Iglesia, children Angelica and Alexandra, brothers Sean, Birdie and Jory, and sisters Cara Licavoli, Rhea Wiatr, Aisha Johnton and Yasmin Wardle.

IGLESIA

The requiem Mass was offered by Father Edgar Abano on Nov. 3, at the St. Robert Bellermine Church in Freehold, New Jersey.

Her remains were cremated and interred at the Gates of Heaven Chapel Mausoleum at 225 Ridgedale Avenue in East Hanover, New Jersey.

While US wants our teachers, Europe wants our students

By Alcuin Papa

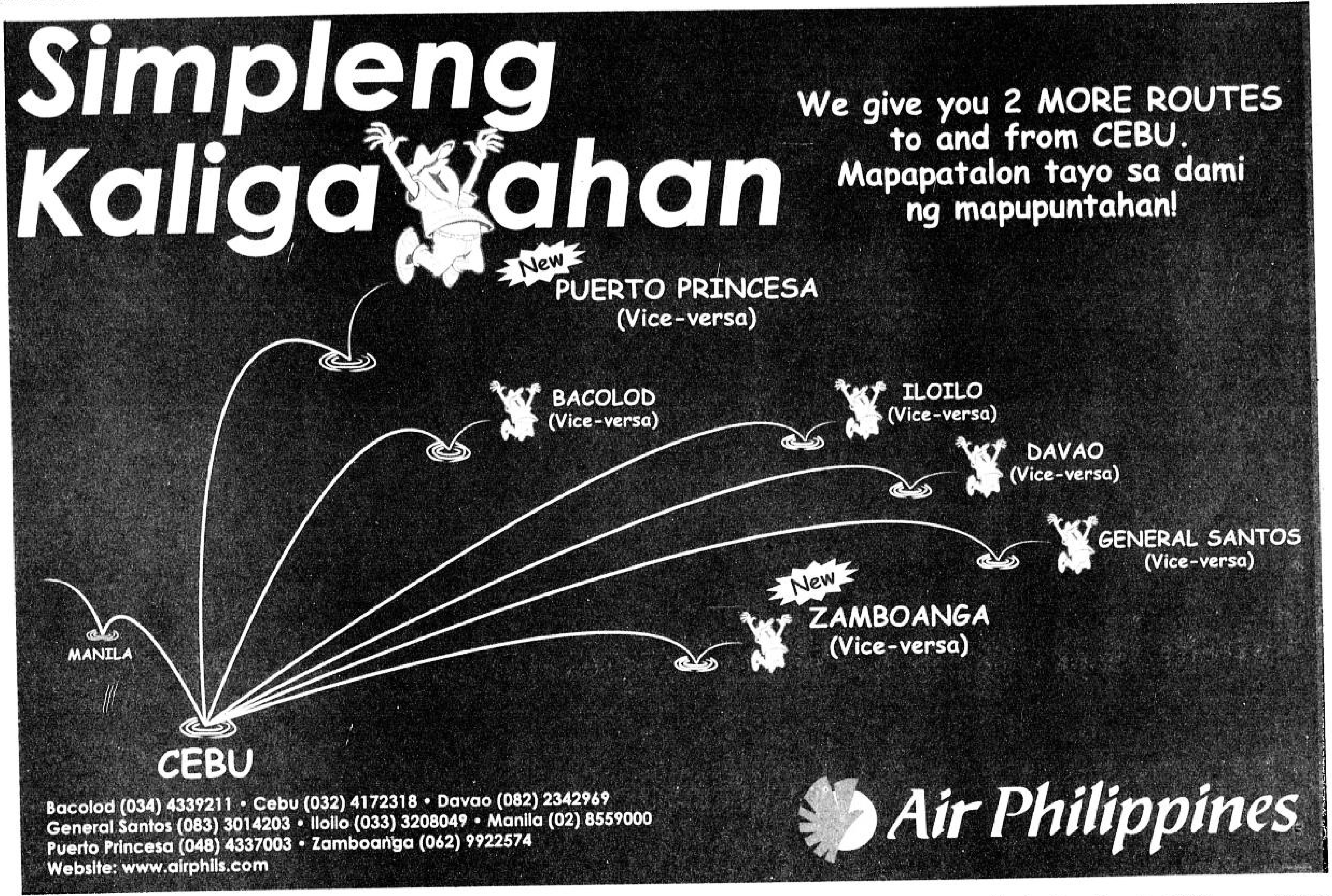
FIRST, THE US WANTS OUR teachers. Now, Europe is going for our students.

Six countries have joined forces to hold an education fair this month in a bid to lure Filipino students to their countries.

While recognizing that the US takes in the bulk of Filipino students who want to go abroad for further studies, embassy officials from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Sweden, Spain and Italy say their countries have more to offer.

"There are many other possibilities (in Europe). We have a long history and a rich culture so students get not only the skills they need but also the experience of a variety of cultures that can enrich their lives. At the same time, Filipinos also have a lot of offer these cultures," said Javier Galvan of the Instituto Cervantes.

Gail Westaway of the British Council said the United Kingdom could be a launching pad for the rest of Europe because of its unique location.



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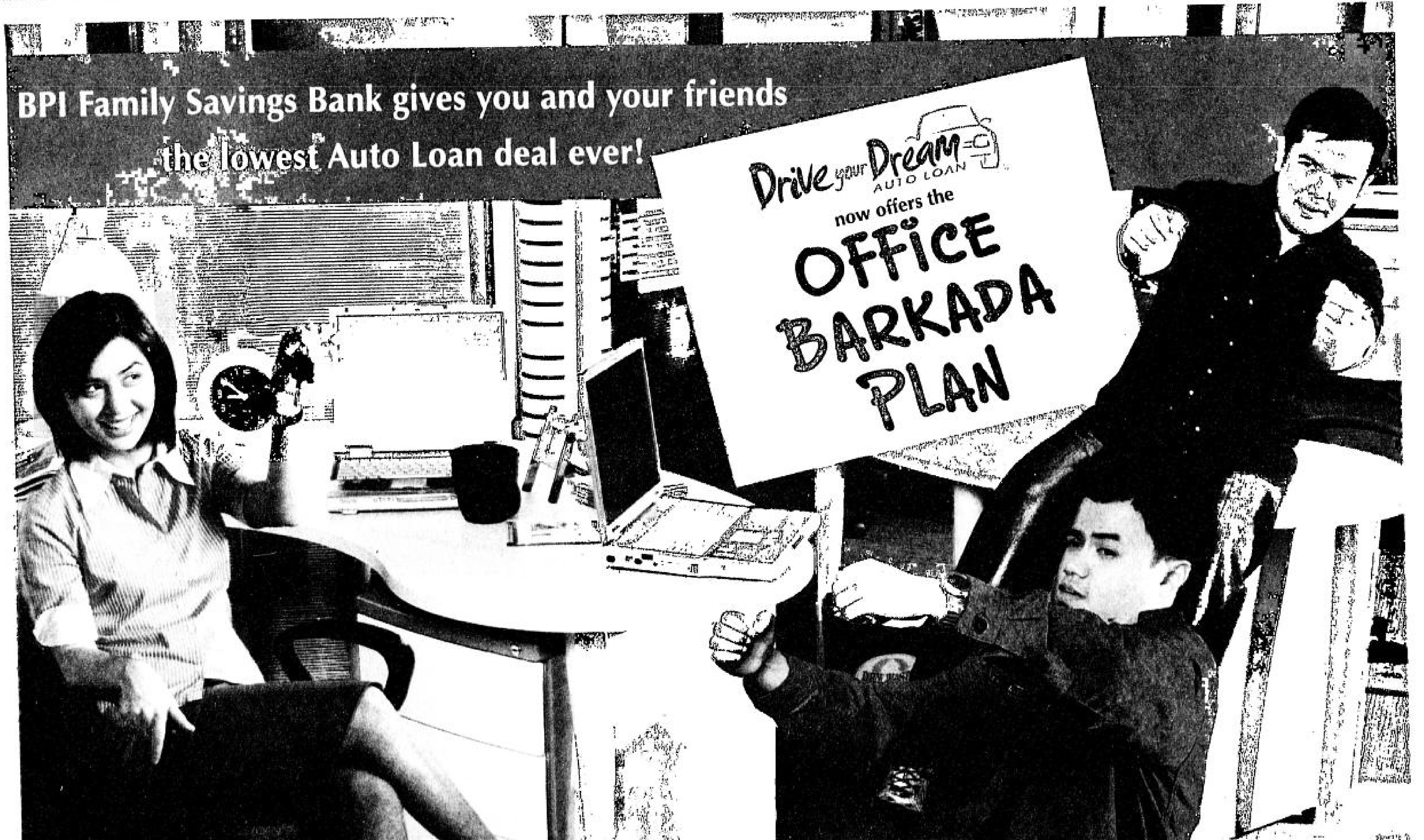

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*The price of the Honda City is as of October 2005 and may change without prior notice.
**Advance Payment Scheme, where the first monthly payment is paid upon booking of the loan

Hyatt 10: Too early to cheer

By Michelle V. Remo

THEY USED TO JOIN THE PRESIDENT IN trumpeting the Arroyo administration's performance on the economic front. But now, they are singing a different tune.

Members of the so-called Hyatt 10, who collectively resigned their posts in July due what they described as disenchantment with the Arroyo presidency, said it was premature for the administration to harp on recent economic gains. They said the Philippines was still far from a real recovery.

The Hyatt 10 members have formed a new group called INCITEGov—International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance—which advocates governance reforms.

Speaking at a public forum, they said the media's portrayal of the country's economic performance was a little exaggerated, given that the Philippines still lags behind its Asian neighbors in economic terms.

"(It has been portrayed in the news) that the economy is poised for takeoff due mainly to the fiscal reform program. But is it really an accurate picture or is it misleading?" said former Education Secretary Florencio Abad.

In a presentation, former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin noted that the country's debt was still rising and the heavy debt payment burden left very little in the government's budget to fund development projects. She said more than a third, or 34 percent, of the national government's budget is used for interest payments alone.

She explained that the growing indebtedness was due to huge budget deficits over the years, loans to state-owned companies and depreciation of the peso relative to other currencies.

While proceeds of the recently implemented VAT Reform Law have yet to be collected, the government's ability to raise revenues had been declining since 1997, when revenue as a percentage of GDP (gross domestic product) hit 19.4 percent. It declined further to 14.4 percent in 2004.

Boncodin noted that while the country's gross international reserves stood at the highest-ever level of $18 billion in September, it paled in comparison with Thailand's $49 billion, Malaysia's $66 billion, South Korea's $199 billion and Indonesia's $36.3 billion. Gross international reserves refer to the totality of a country's foreign exchange holdings and are a measure of its ability to pay for imports and maturing foreign obligations.

Boncodin said the projected decline in the government's budget deficit by the end of the year was "encouraging" as were its support for economic bills such as the rationalization of fiscal incentives which intends to remove tax and duty exemptions granted to certain business sectors.

What remains worrisome, she said, were the underlying political tensions and the still low credit rating of the Philippines, which deters the entry of investments.

Cora Guidote, former head of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' Investor Relations Office, said rejoicing over the peso' strengthening to 54 to a US dollar was premature. She said the peso was simply recovering its level prior to the issuance of a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the new VAT law last July 1.

She said that while there were 24 countries worldwide who got a credit rating upgrade, the Philippines belonged to the six which suffered from recent downgrades. As a result, the Philippines pays at least six percent more in interest than its Asian neighbors when borrowing funds.

Guidote said the Philippine reputation before the international credit market would improve if the government could sustain its initial improvements in revenue collection, privatizing heavily indebted National Power Corp., increased political stability, strengthening of democratic institutions and reduction of its external debts.

Gutierrez: I'll spare no one as Ombudsman

By Philip C. Tubeza

NO ONE, NOT PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo or her family, will be spared from prosecution if she becomes the new Ombudsman, according to Merceditas Gutierrez, the presidential legal counsel.

Gutierrez, who was interviewed along with other candidates by the Judicial and Bar Council members yesterday, said she would also continue to conduct lifestyle checks on government officials.

"We will apply the law to everyone without exception. We are all equal," Gutierrez said when asked if she would prosecute the President and her family if a case were to be filed against them.

"There is the law. There is due process, and evidence would be submitted to you. So, based on the evidence, we will decide and apply the law... I have to do what is mandated by law to the best of my abilities, with commitment and with honesty," she said.

Gutierrez, who is reported to be favored by Ms Arroyo for the position, is among the 14 candidates for the post to be vacated by Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo on Nov. 30.

But she downplayed Ms Arroyo's reported support for her.

"When I learned that I was being endorsed as a candidate for the post, I naturally had to inform my boss, and she told me, 'Go ahead.' That is all that she (the President) told me," Gutierrez said.

She said the JBC has yet to vote on the three nominees it would submit to the President who would then make the choice.

Gutierrez said that if she were to be appointed, her first priority would be to act on pending cases and speed up the process of resolving cases.

The JBC has scheduled three days of interviews of the candidates in public hearings that will end tomorrow.

Besides Gutierrez, those interviewed yesterday were Manila Regional Trial Court Judge Crispin Bravo, Rep. Douglas Cagas, Ateneo Law professor Arturo de Castro, and former special prosecutor Gualberto de la Llana.

The other candidates are Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, Court of Appeals Associate Justice Remedios Salazar Fernando, retired Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Nicodemo Ferrer, Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio, Supreme Court Administrator Christopher Lock, Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Diosdado Peralta, lawyer Arno Sanidad, former National Bureau of Investigation director Florencio Villarin and deputy ombudsman for Luzon Victor Fernandez.

'Go unicameral, parliamentary'

By Michael Lim Ubac

WITH 152 LAWMAKERS PRESENT, THE House of Representatives yesterday started plenary debates on a resolution seeking to "restructure and reengineer" the government by abolishing the current presidential system to pave the way for a parliamentary-federal type as early as 2007.

"Let not the country become hostage by a Senate ... (because of) personal ambitions," said Cagayan de Oro Rep. Constantino Jaraula, chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, delivering his long-delayed sponsorship speech of Committee Report No. 1065.

"Go unicameral, parliamentary!" declared Jaraula as he delivered an impassioned extemporaneous speech to exhort the House to abolish the "centralized, unitary" system of government to allow regions to "become independent states" under a federal system.

He explained that structural changes in the political arena became imperative because the 60-year-old unitary and highly centralized system had become "prone to abuse and (is) inherently corrupt."

GETTING SERIOUS

CA confirms new envoys

By TJ Burgonio

FOR TRYING TO BE FUNNY, AMBAssador Ramoncito S. Mariño yesterday nearly bungled his confirmation by the Commission on Appointments, but the influential Iglesia ni Cristo reportedly saved the day for him.

The commission, chaired by Senate President Franklin Drilon, approved in plenary the nomination of 11 ambassadors, including Mariño, and 11 career officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Early in the day, Sen. Edgardo Angara moved for the deferral of Mariño's appointment as ambassador to Palau, after the senator failed to get satisfactory answers to questions about the Philippines' economic interests in that tiny Micronesian state. Angara was also miffed by the ambassador's comical answers to his questions during the hearing of the CA committee on foreign affairs, chaired by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

"Maybe because of my looks," Mariño said in jest when asked by the senator why President Macapagal-Arroyo had picked him over other career officials.

This elicited laughter from the gallery, prompting Santiago to flare up. "Order," she said. "This is not a laughing matter. This is a serious matter."

But during the CA plenary session in the afternoon, some members of the foreign affairs committee, including Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, expressed surprise when they noticed that he was on list of officials to be confirmed.

"The points have been clarified. There was a unanimous decision to recommend him to the post," Santiago explained said when reminded by Biazon about Angara's motion to defer his appointment pending more information about his background.

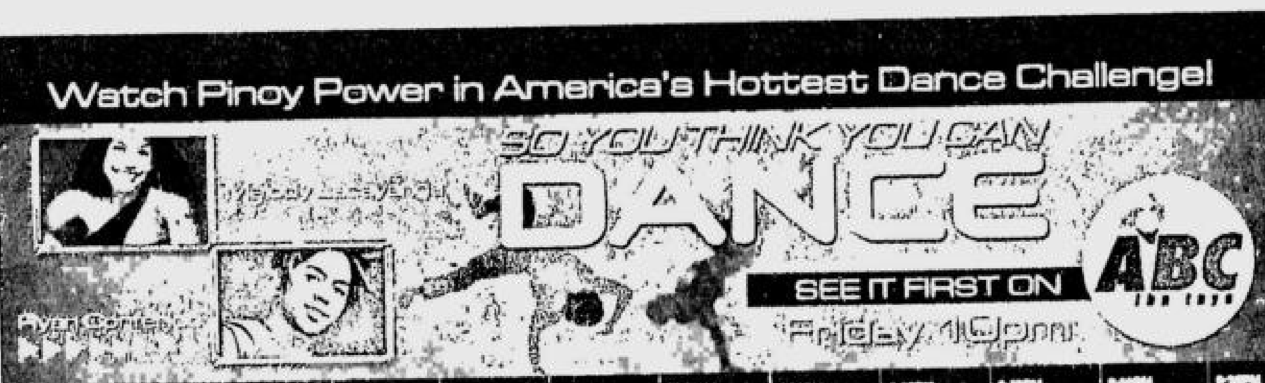
A reliable source said that Iglesia ni Cristo officials had approached Angara at noon and convinced him to withdraw his motion against Mariño, a member of the religious bloc.

The envoys confirmed by the CA were Sonia Brady, ambassador to China with jurisdiction over North Korea and Mongolia; Jose del Rosario, Jordan with jurisdiction over Palestine.

Linglingay Lacanlale, Austria with jurisdiction over Croatia, Slovenia and Slovak Republic; Jaime Yambao, Pakistan with jurisdiction over Afghanistan and Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

Bahnarim Guinomla, Turkey with jurisdiction over Georgia and Azerbaijan; Norberto Basilio, Bangladesh; Al Francis Bichara, Lebanon; Susan Castrence, South Korea; Victoriano Lecaros, Malaysia; and Jose A. Zaide, France.

Also confirmed were Reynaldo Catapang, Maria Rosario C. Aguinaldo, Junever Mahilum-West, Frank Cimafranca, Domingo Nolasco, Noel Eugene Servigon, Sahid Glang, Constancio Vingno, career ministers; Adelio Angelito Cruz, Marlowe Miranda and Enrico Fos, foreign service officers II and Renato Pedro Villa, FSO I.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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Thursday, November 17, 2005

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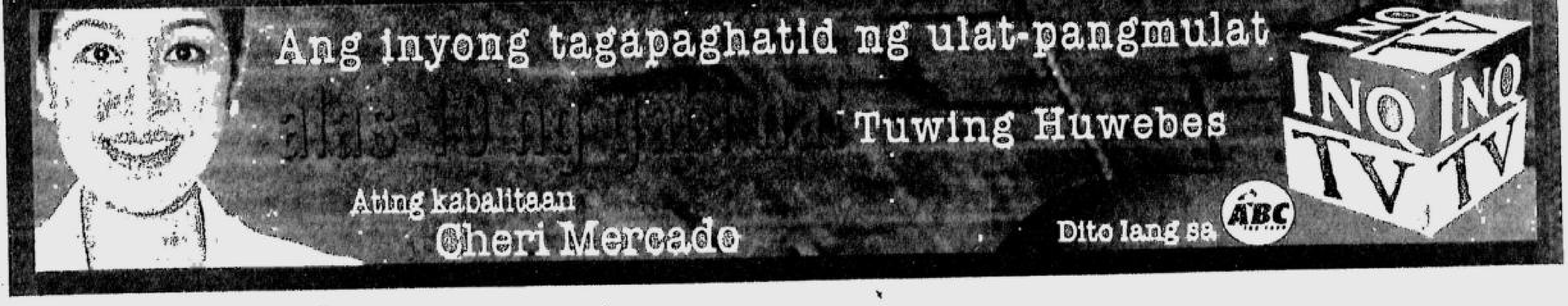
Channel	[illegible]	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM
NBN		Value Vision		New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Bantay Trabaho	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins	Meteor Garden Season 2
ABC 5			EZ Shop		Barclays EPL		EPL Goals		Sentro
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	Hotelier	12 Kingdoms	Slam Dunk	All For Love		24 Oras	
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	Global Battle Of The Bands	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot	
SBN 21		New Life TV Shop						Winner TV Shopping	
Studio 23		Yugioh Duel Monster		UAAP				Batman Beyond	Pinoy Big Brother
MTV Philippines	5 Things About	MTV Cribs	That MTV Chart Show		Pimp My Ride	Pop Inc		MTV Hits	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News		Star MYX
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	
ESPN		World Tenpin Masters '05		Pool/Snooker World Pool League '05		Asian X Games '05 Presented by Kia	LPGA Tournament of Champs 3rd rd.		
Solar Sports	2005 US Open 9-Ball C'ship		WTA '05 Swisscom Challenge Finals				NBA Game Denver Nuggets @ Dallas Mavericks		
Sports Plus	NBA Game Washington @ Cleveland					Party Poker Com World Open '05			
Cinemax	Hell Squad			Purple Hearts				Darkman II The Return Of Durant	
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Strong Medicine		HCA The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	The Nanny
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Unitalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia		Hour China		Wild Discovery		Blueprint For Disaster	
National Geographic		Megastructures		Marine Machines		Catastrophe		Top 5	
Cartoon Network	Yogi Bear Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	What's New Scooby Doo?	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/ What Planet Are You From	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot/ Right On Top	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Naturally Sadie
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fixt	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Angel		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle
AXN		CSI: Miami (Season 3)			E Buzz	The World's Scariest Explosions Caught On Tape		Beastmaster	
JackTV	Dr Katz	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Beat The Geeks	Mars Attacks!				Cinematech	Family Guy
ETC		GBB	Knock First	1 Hr. Edited Version Of Today Show		Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover
HBO		Ned Kelly (3:15 PM)				Shaun Of The Dead (5:05 PM)			Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade
Star Movies		The River Wild (3:05 PM)				Moonstruck			Die Hard (6:45 PM)
Cinema One		[illegible]				Tanging Yaman			
EWTN	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Virtue Storybook	Image Of God	Your Vocation: God's Call In Your Life	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Good Or Evil: Who Decides?	EWTN Gallery	Where God Weeps

Channel	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo				Network Forum		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
ABS-CBN 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Panday	Pinoy Big Brother	Vietnam Rose	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5	Mumbai Thriller	S.O.S		Wala Yan Sa Lolo Ko		Big News	Rockstar Inxs	Inq TV		Look Who's Talking
GMA 7	Extra Challenge		Dama	Encantadia	Sugo	Jewel In The Palace	Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9	WWE Smackdown		The Ultimate Fighter		Salem's Lot		Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13	Japan Video Topics		ME TV		Sea Games Special		King Of Adventure	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
SBN 21			Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Music Video		Sheperds Voice	
Studio 23	Wazzup Wazzup	The Contender		Alias (8:20 PM)	Desperate Housewives		News Central	Oprah		Salt
MTV Philippines			MTV Hits	Get Spotted	TRL		Punk'D	Brand New	MTV Hits	VH1 Video Collections
MYX	MYXILOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
CNN	World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN		Macau Grand Prix 2005	Sportscenter Asia	Pool/Snooker World Pool League '05		LPGA Tournament of Champs 3rd rd.				Sportscenter Asia
Solar Sports			Sports Desk		NBA Game Seattle Sonics @ Boston Celtics					RTC # 16
Sports Plus	Slipstream		NFL 2005 St. Louis @ Seattle						NASCAR Mountain Dew Southern 500 Phoenix	
Cinemax		Another 48 Hrs.			Shot Through The Heart				Fire Down Below (10:50PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Mysterious Way		Strong Medicine		Midsomer Murders: Destroying Angel			Judging Amy (10:35PM)		Mysterious Ways (11:25PM)
Disney Channel	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Lizzie Maguire		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Discovery Channel	Extreme Machines		IBM Innovation Hour		Wild Science		Speed Week		Power Zone	
National Geographic	Wow!		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Megastructures		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Cartoon Network	Battle B-Daman	Machine Robo Rescue	Johnny Bravo	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Samurai Jack	Mike, Lu & Og	Time Squad	Xiaolin Showdown	Teen Titans
Nickelodeon	Romeo	Drake & Josh	The Fairly Odd Parents	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	The Brothers Garcia
Lifestyle Network	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		E! True Hollywood Story		Road & Track	Back To Basics
Star World	Star News Asia	Friends	Scrubs	8 Simple Rules	The Drew Carey Show Miss World Northern Europe Vote For Me	Less Than Perfect Miss World Southern Europe Vote For Me	The Apprentice		Friends	Scrubs
AXN	The Outer Limits (Season IV)		Gamemax	Hollywood's Greatest Stunts	24		24		The Shield	
JackTV	Mad TV		Reno 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Manila Uncovered	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
ETC	Good Morning Miami	Commited	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO					Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow				Nothing In Common (10:50PM)	
Star Movies					The Haunted Mansion			Bram Stoker's Dracula		
Cinema One	Beautiful Life		Madonna Ang Babaeng Ahas				Tigasin			
EWTN	EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Catechism And Controversies	The Word Was Made Flesh	Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	The Journey Home Encore	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



San Mateo raiders off the hook, but Loren is unfazed

By Cynthia D. Balana

LEGARDA

FORMER SEN. LOREN LEGARDA yesterday said she was not surprised by the decision of the Inspector General of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to clear its men of any wrongdoing when they raided an opposition repository of election returns (ERs) last Aug. 17 in San Mateo, Rizal.

Legarda said the AFP's finding has no effect on the ongoing investigation by the Senate on the warrantless raid and seizure of ERs conducted by operatives of the ISAFP and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) on the rented house of handwriting expert Segundo Tabayoyong.

Tabayoyong is one of Legarda's witnesses in her election protest against Vice President Noli de Castro before the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal.

"We are waiting for the result of an impartial investigation being conducted by the Senate on the matter," Legarda said. "I believe that Mr. Tabayoyong has filed charges in court against the concerned ISAFP and CIDG officers, so we will see what happens."

Legarda tapped Tabayoyong, a former chief of the NBI's questioned documents division, to analyze the ERs for possible tampering.

The seized materials were later returned to Legarda although she claimed some documents and other items taken from the house of Carmela Cabuhat were already missing.

During the last Senate hearing on the incident, senators denounced ISAFP chief Brig. Gen. Marlu Quevedo for spinning a "tall tale" that the raid was an "antiterrorism" action based on a tip from an Abu Sayyaf suspect captured in Samar.

They believed that the raid was conducted to seize evidence of electoral fraud, scare off possible witnesses in Legarda's election protest and to derail Tabayoyong's scrutiny of the documents.

Maj. Serme Ayuyao, head of the ISAFP raiding team, and his counterpart in the CIDG, Supt. Wilben Mayor, were among those charged by Tabayoyong in court for violation of domicile.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile then branded Quevedo's testimony as "fantastic," while Sen. Rodolfo Biazon questioned why the ISAFP did not contact the San Mateo police force but instead brought the matter to the CIDG.

Enrile also reprimanded Quevedo after it was discovered that the ISAFP had assigned four agents to guard Cabuhat, a move described by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel as clearly intended to stop Cabuhat from "telling the truth."

"I'm sorry to tell you but you have become undisciplined," Enrile told Quevedo after the ISAFP chief failed to explain why the ISAFP was guarding Cabuhat.

Biazon moved to invite Cabuhat, her maid and the barangay captain of Barangay Modesta who was also present during the raid, to the Senate hearing.

PARC deadline on Luisita lapses

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEADLINE FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) to decide on the revocation of the Hacienda Luisita's stock scheme lapses today without a closure to the controversial case.

The PARC validating committee tasked to review the Department of Agrarian Reform's decision scrapping the hacienda's stock distribution option has found it difficult to establish facts contained in the DAR decision, PARC member Romulo Tapayan said.

"They could not do it in 30 days. They're really having a hard time validating substantial facts. Hacienda Luisita's SDO is not a small issue," Tapayan, a farmer representative to the PARC, said in an interview at the DAR yesterday.

The inter-agency validating committee headed by the Department of Justice has asked the PARC executive committee to give it another 30 days or until Dec. 17 to complete its evaluation.

After an eight-month investigation, the DAR decided to cancel the SDO of the 4,915-hectare sugar estate owned by the family of former president Corazon C. Aquino, saying it has further impoverished the farmers.

The DAR endorsed its terminal report to the PARC, the highest decision-making body on agrarian reform, for its final decision. The PARC, which approved all SDO schemes under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, has the final say on SDO revocations.

The PARC formed a validating team last month to "strengthen" the DAR's position on the Hacienda Luisita case.

Environment Undersecretary for Lands Manuel Gerochi said the committee needed to reconcile "loose ends" in the DAR's report, prompting it to seek an extension of the deadline.

"You cannot disapprove it (request). What are you going to do? What kind of report are you going to get if they don't have complete facts?" Gerochi, vice chair of the PARC execom, said in a phone interview.

"The instruction was clear: the case must have complete facts. There are facts that they are still checking. They want time to hear more from both sides," he said.

The validating committee has issued subpoenas to people who need to be interviewed.

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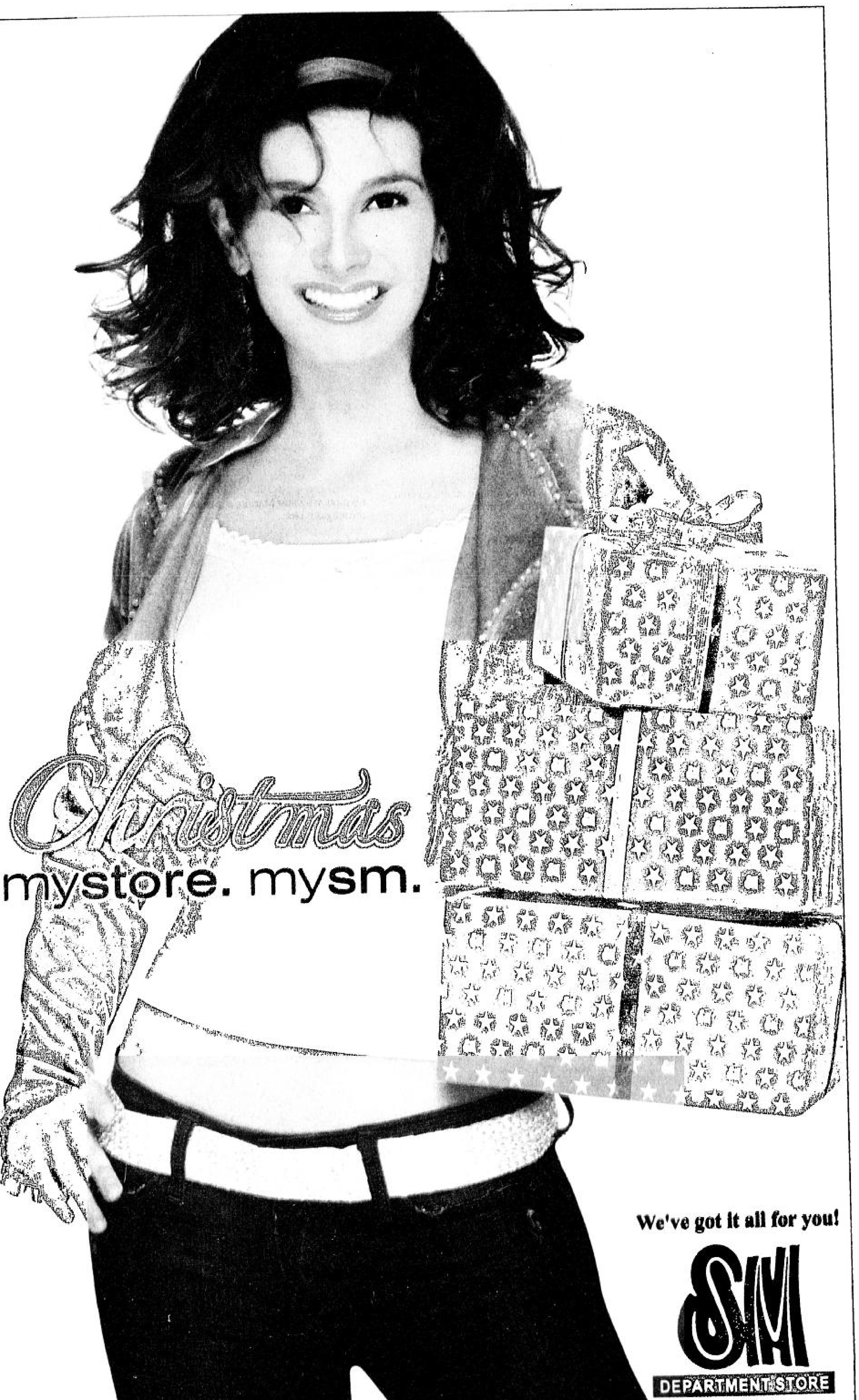

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GMA considered exit scenarios in September, says paper

From page A1

Tatad told the INQUIRER.

The ex-senator had earlier claimed to be the source of "the mother of all [Hello, Garci] tapes" suggesting that Ms Arroyo had stolen the 2004 presidential election—an accusation that she has denied.

"I'm totally convinced that these are President Arroyo's thoughts captured on paper. The document itself is hard to come by if you're not from inside the Palace," Tatad said.

He said the document was being circulated in the military as a form of propaganda to dissuade restive soldiers from taking part in a coup plot.

But Ms Arroyo's annotated copy is "a tightly guarded document," Tatad added.

PRESIDENT ARROYO stresses a point while she addresses the 15th general assembly of the League of Municipalities at the Westin Philippine Plaza. EDWIN BACASMAS

'Secret paper'

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez is familiar with the "secret paper."

Gonzalez yesterday told the INQUIRER that the Cabinet's National Security Cluster Group took up "New Threats to Democracy" around September. He said a check with his calendar showed that there was no Cabinet meeting on Oct. 5.

But Environment Secretary Michael Defensor confirmed that there was a security briefing in Malacañang on Oct. 5. He said it was presided over by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and retired Maj. Gen. Job Mayo.

Gonzalez said the paper was prepared by the National Security Council (NSC) and contained "an overview assessment of the situation here, destabilization moves, threats of the New People's Army, the problem in Mindanao and the need for an anti-terrorism law."

"It's a secret paper. It's a hodgepodge of different kinds of assessments on the political and economic scenario," Gonzalez said in a phone interview.

Defensor confirmed that the security assessment after the impeachment case was dismissed as well as recommendations for better governance were some of the points raised in the paper. But he said the Cabinet members were not given hard copies of the document.

"It was just a Powerpoint presentation ... I even stood up and did something else because everything in it was nothing new to me," he said.

He acknowledged the possibility that the paper could have been prepared by the NSC or the Palace itself.

But he said "exit plans were not discussed" during the briefing.

'Lower than Marcos'

In the document, the President's advisers noted her improved trust rating in Metro Manila, as shown in a Social Weather Stations report in August: -24, "a significant 9-percent improvement from the -33 rating last May, considering MM has always been ... oppositionist."

Read the annotation beside it: "Lowest ever for a President, lower than FMarcos."

The document also said: "As of August, there are also fewer people demanding the President's resignation (as shown by the SWS survey)." The note beside it read: "Dismissal of impeachment is showing reversing this."

Beside the portion saying that the emerging blocs against Ms Arroyo lacked considerable military backing, the note identified the supposed divisions in the Armed Forces: "AFP, divided into three groups: FVR, militant AFP, FG/GMA loyalists."

According to Tatad, Ms Arroyo sees the military split into three groups—those for former President Fidel V. Ramos, the militant AFP, and those loyal to her and her husband, First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

"Despite these divisions, she sees the military 'all geared up, waiting for its tipping point,'" Tatad said, quoting another handwritten note on the military.

CBCP, local governments

The President's advisers expressed wariness over the stance of the Catholic hierarchy ("While refusing to join quit-calls, the Catholic Church has adopted an open-ended position that could still change in the future").

But Ms Arroyo's supposed annotation showed certainty that Church leaders would soon turn against her: "Until December—we expect to see a radical posturing under new CBCP (Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines) leadership in January 2006."

Another annotation was more to the point: "Change in CBCP will lead to call for PGMA resignation."

The President also appeared not to bank on the support of local government officials, who were quick to back her when the political crisis peaked in July.

"[The local government support base] cannot be sustained for so long—since Gov't will be delaying delivery of IRA (Internal Revenue Allotment) project funds," the annotation read.

US factor

The document did not provide extensive analysis of where the United States stood on Ms Arroyo's continued stay in power, but the annotations on the role it and the rest of the international community would play were lengthy.

The notes suggested that Ms Arroyo was convinced she no longer enjoyed US support.

Written at the end of the document were the underlined words "US factor is critical."

Also written there were: "Poor acceptability of GMA in the Bush administration," "High risk for US under GMA," "Incompatibility of interest between GMA boys and US business," "Declining public popularity not conducive to the US," "Indifference [of] international community to GMA leadership," and "High profile graft."

In a part of the document where the advisers mentioned the President's recognition by Forbes magazine as one of the world's most powerful women, a dismissive note was written: "International community anticipates change of GMA."

Reforms

Interestingly, the President mentioned her supposed exit plans in the part citing the need for reforms in the government.

The word "reforms" was underlined and on top of it were written:

"Options (separate briefing), Resignation, Leave of Office, National Government of Solidarity, creeping governance, revolt within."

As if to describe the national government of solidarity, the words "power sharing" were written below it. It was also described in another note as a means "to dissipate the credibility of the opposition."

"No details are given. But all options are self-explanatory, and Ms Arroyo wants a special briefing on the same," Tatad said.

Power-sharing, etc.

And as later events would show, the opposition has been offered representation in the Cabinet.

"Power-sharing has been offered to and rejected by the opposition," Tatad pointed out. "Creeping governance is already happening. But the real threat comes from a 'revolt within' the Arroyo camp."

He said that from his understanding, creeping governance meant "governing without really governing—just a matter of staying there and surviving; no governance at all."

He said the revolt could be "a coup from the center" led by generals loyal to Ms Arroyo, who could subsequently remain as extra-constitutional head of the government.

A part of the paper saying that the Arroyo administration was still the best alternative did not seem to impress the President.

"PGMA to continuously update and shape her Exit Plan," read the annotation.

Plans coming to pass

Asked what made him believe that the annotations indeed reflected the President's thoughts, Tatad said he believed in the credibility of his source.

He also pointed out that some of the handwritten plans had come to pass in recent days.

Tatad cited the note written beside the discussion of an intelligence report alleging the use of provocateurs in protest marches: "GMA to heighten this to keep other groups from joining the rally."

He observed that during the farmers' march from Northern, Central and Southern Luzon to Mendiola last month, police repeatedly warned of New People's Army infiltrators who would supposedly instigate violence. The militant farmers, in turn, caught armed military and police agents trying to mingle with the marchers.

At the end of the document wherein measures were listed to counter opposition propaganda, these phrases were written: "media management" and "offensive media plan."

Only last week, in a speech before the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, the President called on the media to shed its "bad boy" image and report "positive" news instead of being preoccupied with bad news.

And over the All Saints Day holidays, she leaked ABS-CBN broadcaster Julius Babao's alleged bailout of a terror suspect.

"These are all nothing new. What's significant is we have handwritten notes showing that these were all planned," Tatad said. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

Transsexual Pinoys . . .

From page A1

decent living as entertainers in Japan.

Speaking with the INQUIRER in a series of interviews, she said she was not as sure of feeling the same warmth among fellow Filipinos, many of whom look askance at people like her who believe that God made a mistake when she was born with a penis.

"Whenever I looked in the mirror, I felt that there was something wrong," she recalled.

Sex reassignment

Kei had to live with the anatomy of a man for most of her life. But she got herself silicone breast implants, thanks to her savings as an entertainer in Japan.

It was only two years ago, when she turned 28, that she decided to go under the knife and chase her dream: to look as female as she feels.

"I finally decided to do it because I felt that it was time I took care of myself," Kei said. "I'm done with my obligations to my family. We already have a car, an apartment, and my siblings are done with school."

But despite her certainty that to look like a woman was what she had always wanted, she was beset by doubt and fear.

"There was fear, of course, because once my penis is removed, I cannot put it back again if I change my mind. I also worried about what will happen when I get older, or if there will be complications," she said.

With encouragement from family and friends, Kei flew to Thailand and spent $6,000 on what is called sex reassignment surgery. She went to a doctor highly recommended by other Filipino transsexuals.

The surgery took four hours. When Kei woke up, she had the sexual apparatus of a woman.

But she had to endure certain post-operative measures in the next two weeks. She also had to take estrogen pills to flush out the male hormone, testosterone, from her body.

Nothing to hide

Six months after the surgery, Kei hurdled the ultimate test: sex.

"My former boyfriend, who was with me throughout the operation, was my first. And it was an experience because I could finally have sex with more confidence," she said, adding:

"I don't have to hide anything anymore."

But according to Kei, the biggest reward is not the sex with heterosexual men, or the bigger pay, but the end of the long wait to become what she has always wanted to be.

"Finally, what I am and how I look are one and the same," she said.

The Japanese easily accept Kei's situation, although there are others who think she was wrong to change what nature gave her.

But she feels the discrimination more in her own country. "People generally look down on people like us," Kei said. "You can see it on television, where gay men are usually the butt of jokes."

It's not the same in Thailand or in Japan, where gay men are mostly treated the same as everybody else, she said.

Love at first sight

Indeed, some gay men even find true love, such as Hilda (not her real name), who works in the upscale Kingyo bar in the Tokyo district of Roppongi.

Hilda met the love of her life during one of her performances, and he asked her to go out with him at the end of the night.

They have been inseparable since then.

"It was something like love at first sight," she said. "I was lucky, I guess, because I found someone who loves me for what I am."

Hilda and her husband have been together for more than 10 years. Two pet dogs complete their family.

She expressed confidence that other people like herself would also find the love they were looking for—without changing their sex.

She said it was of extreme importance that gay men be both psychologically and physically prepared for that life-changing operation.

'One and the same'

Hilda had her sex reassignment surgery done in the Philippines for P180,000, but only after three months of counseling.

She said some people had tried to dissuade her but that she was bent on having the operation.

"Every time I went to the bathroom, I would look at my genitals and ask myself what they were doing there. They don't belong there at all," she said.

Thus, as soon as she could afford it, she went through the operation—and finally felt complete.

"For the first time, what I feel and what I am are one and the same," Hilda said. "I thought to myself, This is it; I am finally a girl."

Her family stayed with her throughout the operation. She even shared a recovery room with her grandmother, who went through another type of surgery.

She was so excited that she had sex with her boyfriend just three months after the operation.

"My doctor was angry. But we could not wait," she said.

Warning

But Hilda cautions gay men from simply paying a doctor and getting sex reassignment surgery.

It's not for everybody, she warned.

"I tell them that they should not do it just because they think they need it to work in Japan, or to please a boyfriend. It must be because they really feel that they need it to feel whole," she stressed.

As for herself, Hilda cannot ask for more now that she has realized her dream and is in love.

"I am fulfilled and blessed. I can die now," she declared. *Tomorrow: Making a living in Japan*

COMING INTO HER OWN, Kei Rodriguez is now a seductive female, one of 100 transsexual Filipinos who have found acceptance and a profitable living as entertainers in Japan. TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

'Ready for the world!?' Ad Congress opens today

From page A1

and advertising professionals and students, are expected to attend the two-day conference at the Waterfront Hotel.

Organizers have chosen the theme, "Ready for the world!?" along with its "interrobang" (question mark and exclamation point), in posting a debate on whether the Philippines and the Filipinos are ready to compete in the global arena.

Preparations for this year's meeting were marred by hitches and conflicts, particularly the pullout of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) from the Advertising Board of the Philippines.

The KBP, representing TV and radio stations, had traditionally been among the main sponsors of the congress since it was first held on April 28, 1969, also in Cebu.

The group's withdrawal stemmed from differences among members over an 18-minute commercial load limit per hour set by KBP officials on TV and radio shows.

GMA-7, now the country's top television station, had earlier pulled out of the KBP to avoid being bound by the KBP limit. The decision, according to sources, has resulted in additional advertising revenues for the broadcasting giant, amounting to P500 million monthly.

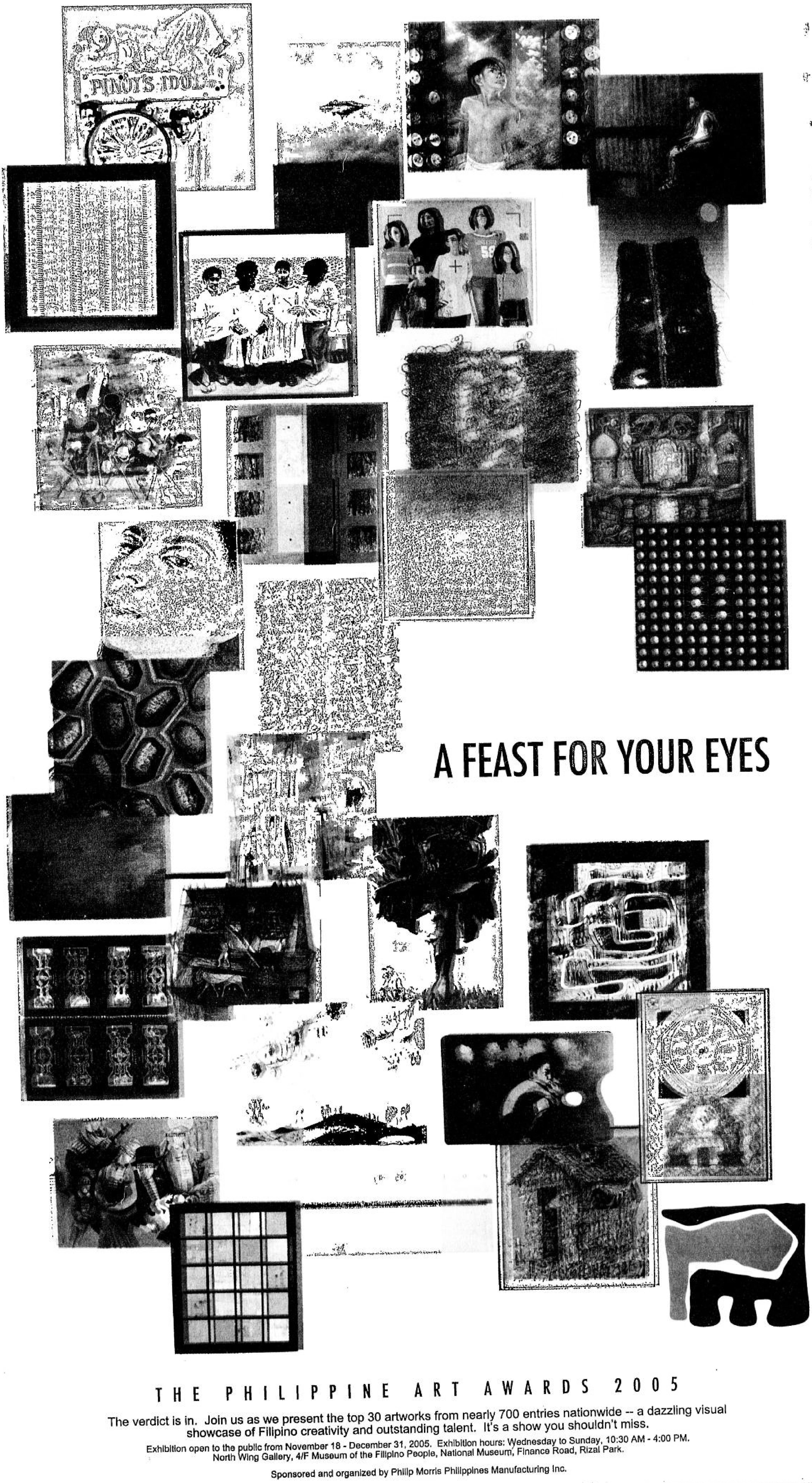
GMA-7 wrestled the top spot in the industry from ABS-CBN this year. It is set to formally launch its new station, QTV, during a cocktail party tonight.

Adboard chair Raul S. Alvarez acknowledged the issues confronting the 19th staging of the PAC.

"Despite the seeming divisiveness of the advertising industry as one of its pillars, the KBP, chose to withdraw from the Adboard, I remain steadfast in my belief that the issues will be resolved," Alvarez said in his message.

Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, president of Ayala Corp. and vice chair of the conference, will deliver the keynote speech today on "Selling Brand Philippines."

INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, who heads the PR and publicity committee, will speak on "The Future of TV, Radio and Print" tomorrow.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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

China reports 1st human bird flu infection; 53 birds die in Britain

NINE-YEAR-OLD He Junyao fell ill around the same time as his 12-year-old sister. AFP

BEIJING—A SENIOR CHINESE OFFICIAL says H5N1 antibodies have been detected in a 9-year-old boy in Hunan province, the first admission of a human bird flu infection in China, the South China Morning Post reported on Wednesday.

China's Health Ministry could not immediately confirm the report.

The semi-official China News Service, quoting Qi Xiaoqiu, director of the Ministry of Health's department of disease control, said the government was waiting for the results of a joint investigation with the World Health Organization before confirming whether the boy was the first human case of avian influenza in the country.

But the China News Service did not say which strain of bird flu the boy had tested positive for.

"During the early stage, antibodies were found, but now the boy is positive to antibody tests," the news service quoted Qi as saying. The comments also were reported by Hong Kong's South China Morning Post newspaper.

"We are waiting for the advice of the WHO. The WHO has a set of procedures to confirm a case and it usually takes two laboratories to confirm."

He Junyao and his 12-year-old sister fell ill last month and were treated for pneumonia symptoms. The boy was discharged from hospital last weekend but his sister died.

Chinese officials said initial tests showed she had tested negative for bird flu.

The WHO is sending a team this week to the southern province of Hunan to investigate the cases, which China later said could not be ruled out as bird flu. The children lived close to the site of a poultry outbreak.

The H5N1 virus has killed more than 60 people elsewhere in Asia since 2003 and is endemic in poultry flocks in many parts of the region. Almost all of those who died had been in close contact with infected birds.

Health experts fear millions could be killed around the world if the virus mutates to the point where it could spread easily from person to person.

Battling to control several outbreaks of the H5N1 virus, China vowed on Tuesday to vaccinate its entire stock of 14 billion poultry, with the government footing the bill, as it scrambles to prevent more outbreaks.

It gave no timetable for the inoculation campaign.

China is also probing a possible human infection in a northeastern province, the World Health Organization said on Monday. AFP

Senate wants US out of Iraq soonest

WASHINGTON—SHOWING MOUNTING DISCONTENT among Republicans over the Iraq war, the US Senate resolved on Tuesday that Iraqis should start taking the lead in their own security next year to allow a phased withdrawal of US troops.

But the Republican-led Senate rejected Democrats' demand for Republican President George W. Bush to submit a plan and an estimated timetable to withdraw US forces, a step Bush has vehemently opposed.

The Senate's 79 to 19 vote came days after Bush, facing waning support for the war and the lowest job approval ratings of his presidency, launched an aggressive counteroffensive against Democratic critics who say he misled the country by hyping prewar intelligence on Iraq to justify the 2003 invasion.

The Senate demand, and with it the stirrings of Republican revolt, was another blow to Bush, who is reeling over a string of setbacks including his administration's response to Hurricane Katrina, controversy over Supreme Court nominees and high gas prices.

But Bush, meeting Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Kyoto, told reporters he saw the Senate action as positive because senators rejected a withdrawal timetable.

"It is important that we succeed in Iraq... The only reason we won't succeed is if we lose our nerve and the terrorists are able to drive us out of Iraq by killing innocent lives, but I view this as positive developments on (Capitol) Hill," he said.

The Senate resolution said 2006 "should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of United States forces from Iraq."

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada called the resolution a rejection of Bush's Iraq policy.

"Today you saw a vote of no confidence in the Bush administration's policy on Iraq. Democrats and Republicans acknowledged that staying the course is not the way to go." The Republican resolution, sponsored by Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee and Armed Services Committee Chair John Warner of Virginia, largely mirrored a Democratic resolution, except for Democrats' key requirement for a withdrawal plan.

Senators defeated the Democrats' resolution 58-40 before backing the other.

Texas Republican John Cornyn said the Senate "chose not the cut-and- run option but the stay-and-fight option—and to win—and then to bring our troops home as soon as possible."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was pressed by reporters on whether the vote signaled a growing impatience with the Iraq war similar to that sparked more than three decades ago by the US war in Vietnam.

"Oh, I wouldn't go down that road myself," Rumsfeld, who has rejected any direct comparison between the two wars, told a Pentagon news conference.

Bush has argued that setting a timetable for pulling out the nearly 160,000 US troops in Iraq would send a green light to insurgents. Reuters

A VIETNAMESE health worker disinfects bags of poultry at a government collection point in Tran Phu commune in the Hoang Mai district of Hanoi, Vietnam on Wednesday. AP

Israel, Palestine agree to open Gaza borders

JERUSALEM—ISRAEL AND THE Palestinians, under strong US pressure, reached an elusive agreement Tuesday to open Gaza's borders starting Nov. 25, a step vital to turning the economically crippled territory into a success in the wake of Israel's withdrawal.

The deal, reached during a marathon overnight negotiating session run by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, gives Palestinians control over a border for the first time, allowing them to travel freely into Egypt and to export their goods. Israel will be able to see who comes and goes, with the help of European monitors, but Palestinians will retain final authority.

"This agreement is intended to give Palestinian people the freedom to move, to trade, to live ordinary lives," Rice said.

The deal provides a much-needed boost to Gaza's economy and strengthens Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas ahead of Jan. 25 parliament elections. Gaza is seen as a test for how the Palestinians would handle an independent state.

Violence could still derail the deal, as it has countless other agreements between the two sides in the past, but officials were upbeat, with Rice lauding it as a "big step forward" in Israeli-Palestinian relations badly damaged by five years of bloody fighting.

Negotiators immediately began preparing for the gritty work of sorting out the details necessary for carrying out the border agreement, which will also release tens of millions of dollars in international aid for rebuilding Gaza.

The deal marked the most intensive US involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in years, and there were hopes that its success would encourage Rice to become more personally involved in future negotiations.

Israel and the Palestinians were deadlocked after five months of talks when Rice decided Monday to postpone her trip to Asia to personally mediate in her Jerusalem hotel suite. AP

Prison abuse at secret Baghdad jail exposed

BAGHDAD—IRAQ FACED A FRESH prison scandal Tuesday after Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari ordered an investigation into reports of abuse at a clandestine interior ministry jail.

The announcement came as 15 Iraqis, including 10 policemen and three soldiers, died in rebel attacks, a further sign of unabating violence exactly a month ahead of national elections.

US forces also announced the death of three marines in western Iraq where 80 insurgents have been killed in the past two days.

Jaafari told a press conference he had "received information relating to the presence of 173 Iraqi detainees at a center run by the interior ministry, some of whom said they were badly fed or had been tortured."

US forces raided an underground shelter at an interior ministry building Sunday evening and found 167 undocumented detainees, most of them Sunnis, according to a source close to the government.

They took the detainees to another holding facility and arrested police who had been guarding them, the source said.

US forces in Baghdad contacted by AFP declined to comment on the incident, but the US embassy welcomed Jaafari's statement of concern, noting that the Iraqi leader "confirmed that such practices are completely contrary to Iraqi government policy."

US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and General George Casey, the overall head of the US-led military force in Iraq, discussed the case "with the leaders of the Iraqi government at the highest levels.

"We agree with Iraq's leaders that the mistreatment of detainees is a serious matter and totally unacceptable."

While the Iraqi government is taking the lead in investigating the case and prosecuting those found guilty, US officials are providing technical help, including support from US Department of Justice and FBI investigators, the statement read.

The UN mission in Iraq on Monday accused the interior ministry of maintaining hundreds of individuals in detention despite judicial orders for their release.

Sunni Arabs, who provide the backbone to the insurgency, have accused Shiite-led security agencies of engaging in torture and extra-judicial executions.

In an unrelated case, a brother of Iraq's Sunni Arab parliament speaker Hajem al-Hassani, seized with two bodyguards by Kurdish security officials a week ago, was released Tuesday by US and Iraqi security forces. AFP

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US troops killed 3 brods of would-be Jordan bomber

AMMAN—JORDANIAN AUTHORITIES said Tuesday an Iraqi woman who confessed to taking part in a suicide bombing operation against Amman hotels has told them three of her brothers were killed by US forces in Iraq.

Other sources have disclosed a further link to the Iraq insurgency, telling AFP that the would-be bomber's Jordanian brother-in-law, an explosives expert with experience in Afghanistan, had also died fighting US troops in Iraq.

The revelations came as officials pressed ahead with a probe into the Nov. 9 triple hotel blasts, which killed 58 people, trying in particular to learn if a four-person Iraqi suicide team had help from people who might still be in Jordan.

"The priority is to find out if the suicide bombers had accomplices who are still in Jordan," a security source said.

An American man who died of wounds from the attack on Tuesday became the fourth US bombing fatality.

The attacks targeted three downtown hotels used by Westerners travelling to Iraq and were claimed by an al-Qaida unit based there, headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Zarqawi, a Jordanian-born fugitive sentenced to death in Amman in 2002 for planning the murder of a US aid official, has been directing a ferocious insurgency in Iraq aimed at driving US troops from the country.

The group claiming responsibility for Wednesday's killings vowed to carry out further strikes against Jordan, a close US ally that is helping train Iraqi police and army personnel on its territory.

Jordanian officials said the woman captured Sunday, Sajida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi, 35, had so far provided few leads apart from her apparent motivation.

In their probe so far investigators, according to security sources, have learned that Samer al-Rishawi, a key aide to Zarqawi, was one of her three brothers killed by US forces battling insurgents in western Iraq. AFP

US charges 3 Chinese immigrants for acting as 'agents'

LOS ANGELES—THREE CHINESE immigrants were charged Tuesday with "acting as agents" for Beijing over an alleged plot to steal secret US Navy silent propulsion technology and smuggle it to China, prosecutors said.

But an indictment handed down by a US grand jury did not charge the trio with the far more serious offense of espionage as no classified information was found among information they were allegedly taking to China, officials told AFP.

Instead, the indictment issued in Los Angeles accuses the three of "acting as agents of a foreign government without prior notification to the Attorney General of the United States."

The suspects are Mak Chi, an engineer with a US military contractor who had access to the highly sensitive data, and his wife, Rebecca Chiu Lai-wah, as well as Mak's brother, former television director Mak Tai-wing.

According to a Federal Bureau of Investigation affidavit, Mak Chi, who worked for defense contractor Power Paragon, transferred data relating to a sensitive US government project to his home, where his wife helped him copy it onto CDs.

He then gave the CDs to his brother Mak Tai-wing, who encrypted the information and made arrangements to take it with him to China.

The three have not been charged with spying at this point in the investigation as while the information they were allegedly planning to smuggle was sensitive, no data classified as "secret" has been detected on the disc.

"The contents of the computer disc that was seized when the defendants were arrested has not yet revealed any classified information," explained US Attorney's office spokesperson Thom Mrozek.

The indictment replaces earlier charges in which the three—together with a fourth suspect, Mak Tai-wing's wife, who was not charged in the new indictment—were accused of stealing government property.

The charges come after Mak Tai-wing and his wife Li Fuk-heung were arrested at Los Angeles International Airport on Oct. 28 as they boarded a flight to Hong Kong, allegedly carrying an encrypted computer disc carrying sensitive military data supplied by Mak Chi. AFP

US suspends 'war on terror' trials

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED States on Tuesday suspended its disputed military trials for "war on terror" detainees after a ruling by a federal judge.

"The courts have intervened, as I understand it, and things are off for a period until the courts sort through things," US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters.

After the federal judge's decision on Monday, the Defense Department said it had postponed the first trial hearing of accused "Australian Taliban" David Hicks, which was scheduled to start Friday at the Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba.

US District Judge Colleen Kollar Kotelly ordered that the Hicks trial be suspended ahead of an anticipated ruling by the US Supreme Court on the legality of the special military tribunals set up after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

The Pentagon said it had not yet decided whether it would appeal the federal judge's decision. Spokesperson Bryan Whitman said the ruling applied only to Hicks, but no dates have been set for any other trials to start.

The Supreme Court has said it would give a ruling in 2006 on the military trials, which have been criticized as a violation of basic human rights.

The treatment and legal rights of detainees at Guantanamo, who are classified as enemy combatants falling outside the Geneva conventions, have been the subject of intense debate and international criticism.

In a move that drew condemnation from civil legal groups, the US Senate voted on Tuesday to curtail the right of detainees at the Guantanamo camp to appeal their detention in US courts.

Under the proposal, detainees will only be able to go to a Washington federal court after they have been sentenced.

Amid allegations detainees at Guantanamo have been mistreated, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak, demanded on Tuesday that the US provide unfettered, unconditional access to the military-run prison.

But the US State Department rejected the request, saying it was ready to cooperate but that there were "procedures" to be adhered to.

"We have been open. We have been transparent. We have nothing to hide," spokesperson Adam Ereli said.

If unrestricted access was denied, a UN inspection set for December would be called off, Nowak told AFP. A report would be issued instead based on eyewitness accounts.

Around 500 detainees are being held without charge at the military-run prison at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba.

Most of the inmates were captured in Afghanistan and Pakistan after a US-led offensive toppled the Taliban government in Kabul in late 2001.

The United States has declared the detainees illegal enemy combatants who are not protected by the Geneva Conventions.

President George W. Bush's administration devised the special military commissions to try the detainees but critics say the tribunals lack basic legal safeguards. *AFP*

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Nun bares sex abuse by priest

LARCHMONT, NEW YORK—A 68-year-old nun who is an accomplished educator and counselor told a crowd of Catholics that she was abused from the age of 11 by a priest who took advantage of her grief when her big sister died in a car crash.

"He would hug me ... and then he would be all over me," Sister Claire Smith said. "It was the 1950s, and I was an Irish Catholic girl from the Bronx. I thought priests were almost godlike."

The abuse continued until she was 18, she said, and "I was robbed of my growing up."

Smith, who has multiple sclerosis and broke her legs in an accident two weeks ago, spoke from a motorized wheelchair at the Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church to the local chapter of Voice of the Faithful, an organization that supports victims of priests' abuse and seeks a larger voice in church governance.

She said she became an Ursuline nun because she admired the nuns of the parish, but "hiding may have been a part of it." Because of the abuse, she considered herself unfit for romance and marriage, she said, because "Who would ever have me? I'm used goods."

But she made "a creative U-turn," stopped blaming herself, got psychiatric help and dedicated herself to a robust career. She was an antiwar and civil rights activist, earned graduate degrees in theology and counseling, taught at the College of New Rochelle and put in time as principal at her old school in the Bronx.

She still does counseling, sometimes for priests and nuns.

"Strange to say, the experience of being abused has helped sometimes when I counsel others who had the same experience," she said.

One woman in the audience criticized Smith for putting up with abuse when she was as old as 18. But Smith said she kept it to herself into her 40s because in the years before the scandal of abusive priests broke nationwide, "No one would have believed me. People would hate me if I told them."

Smith refused to name the priest, who she said is now dead, partly because she signed a confidentiality agreement with the Archdiocese of New York when she reported the abuse in the 1980s and received "a paltry sum" for counseling.

An archdiocese spokesperson, Joseph Zwilling, said he was aware of Smith's story but couldn't comment on her claims. *AP*

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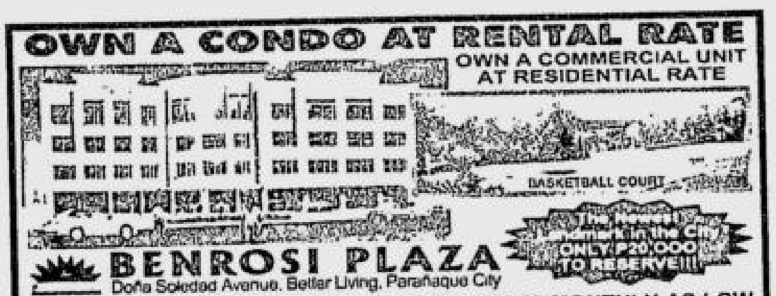

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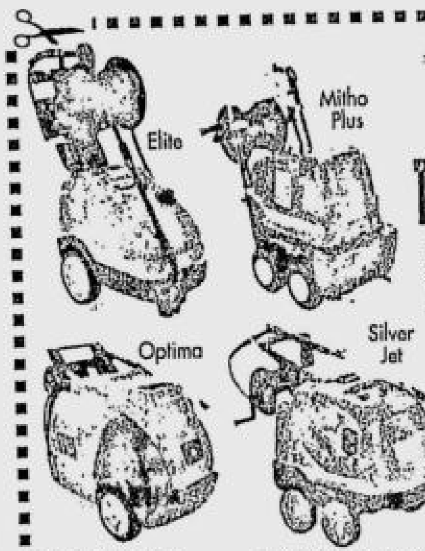

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Van Gogh, Cézanne masterpieces top most stolen arts list

WASHINGTON—THE FBI RELEASED A LIST of the world's top 10 art crimes on Tuesday, asking for the public's help in tracking down masterpieces by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Leanardo da Vinci and other precious artwork stolen from museums and private collections.

The 10 criminal cases, including the theft of thousands of ancient artifacts from Iraq, represent losses of an estimated $600 million, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation said in a statement.

Among the high-profile thefts are Edvard Munch's "The Scream," stolen last year from the museum bearing his name in Oslo, Norway, two Vincent Van Gogh paintings with a combined worth of $30 million stolen in Amsterdam in 2002, Paul Cézanne's "View of Auvers-su-Oise," Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio's "Nativity" and Leonardo da Vinci's "Madonna of the Yarnwinder," the FBI said. The list was compiled by a newly formed Art Crime Team at the FBI.

The Art Crime Team was formed in the aftermath of the theft and looting of thousands of artifacts from Iraqi museums and historic sites since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

By posting the thefts on its website, the FBI said it hopes the list will encourage people to write or call with tips and information about the cultural crimes. The art world loses a staggering $6 billion a year due to theft, it said. "Theft of cultural property, no matter where in the world, impoverishes us all," FBI Assistant Director Chris Swecker said. The agency also included three paintings on the list that have been recovered, partly with the help of the FBI.

Two paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir and a self-portrait by Rembrandt were stolen from Sweden's National Museum in Stockholm five years ago. After Stockholm police tracked down one of the Renoir works, police from several countries finally found the missing paintings this year, with the Renoir turning up in Los Angeles and the Rembrandt piece found in Denmark. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO THE DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF SAN NICOLAS (BATANGAS), INC.

1. Pursuant to Monetary Board Resolution No. 1443 dated November 10, 2005 ordering the closure of the Rural Bank of San Nicolas (Batangas), Inc. (RBSNI), the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) will start its operations for the servicing of claims for insured deposits in the closed RBSNI on Friday, November 18, 2005.

2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the following payoff sites where they can file their claims with the PDIC representatives during office hours (8:00 AM to 5:00 PM), from Monday to Friday.

RBSNI Office/Branch	*Payoff Site/s Address*	*Duration of Initial Operations*
San Nicolas (Head Office)	San Nicolas, Batangas	November 18, 2005 to December 9, 2005
Balayan Branch	Balayan, Batangas	November 18, 2005 to December 9, 2005
Lemery Branch	Lemery, Batangas	November 18, 2005 to December 9, 2005
San Pascual Branch	San Pascual, Batangas	November 18, 2005 to December 9, 2005
Silang Branch	Silang, Cavite	November 18, 2005 to December 9, 2005
Rosario Branch	Rosario, Batangas	November 18, 2005 to December 2, 2005

After the said date, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC Claims Counter, 6th Floor, SSS BLDG, Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino St., Makati City from Monday to Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. or by mail to:

The Manager
Claims Processing Department
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
2228 Chino Roces Avenue
1231 Makati City

3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook, Certificate of Time Deposit, or Bank Statement including Unused Checks.
   b. Two (2) latest identification cards/documents (IDs) with depositor's signature.

   Other documents may be required by the PDIC representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.

4. Pursuant to the provision of R.A. 3591, as amended by R.A. 9302, the last day for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of San Nicolas (Batangas), Inc.. is on November 10, 2007. After November 10, 2007 (prescriptive date), PDIC, as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

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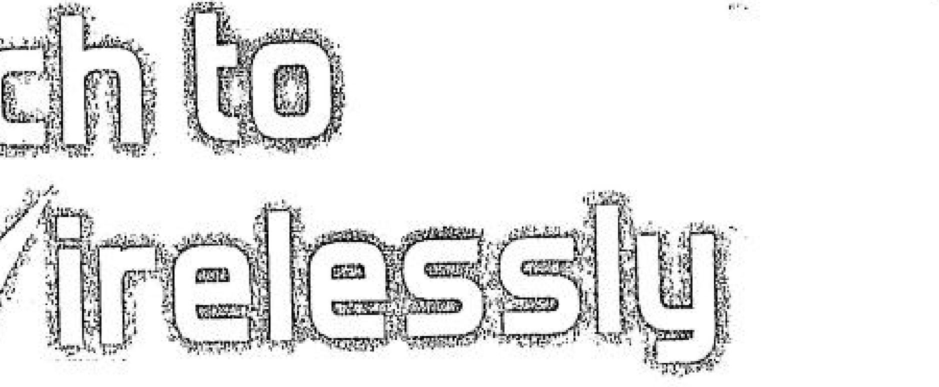

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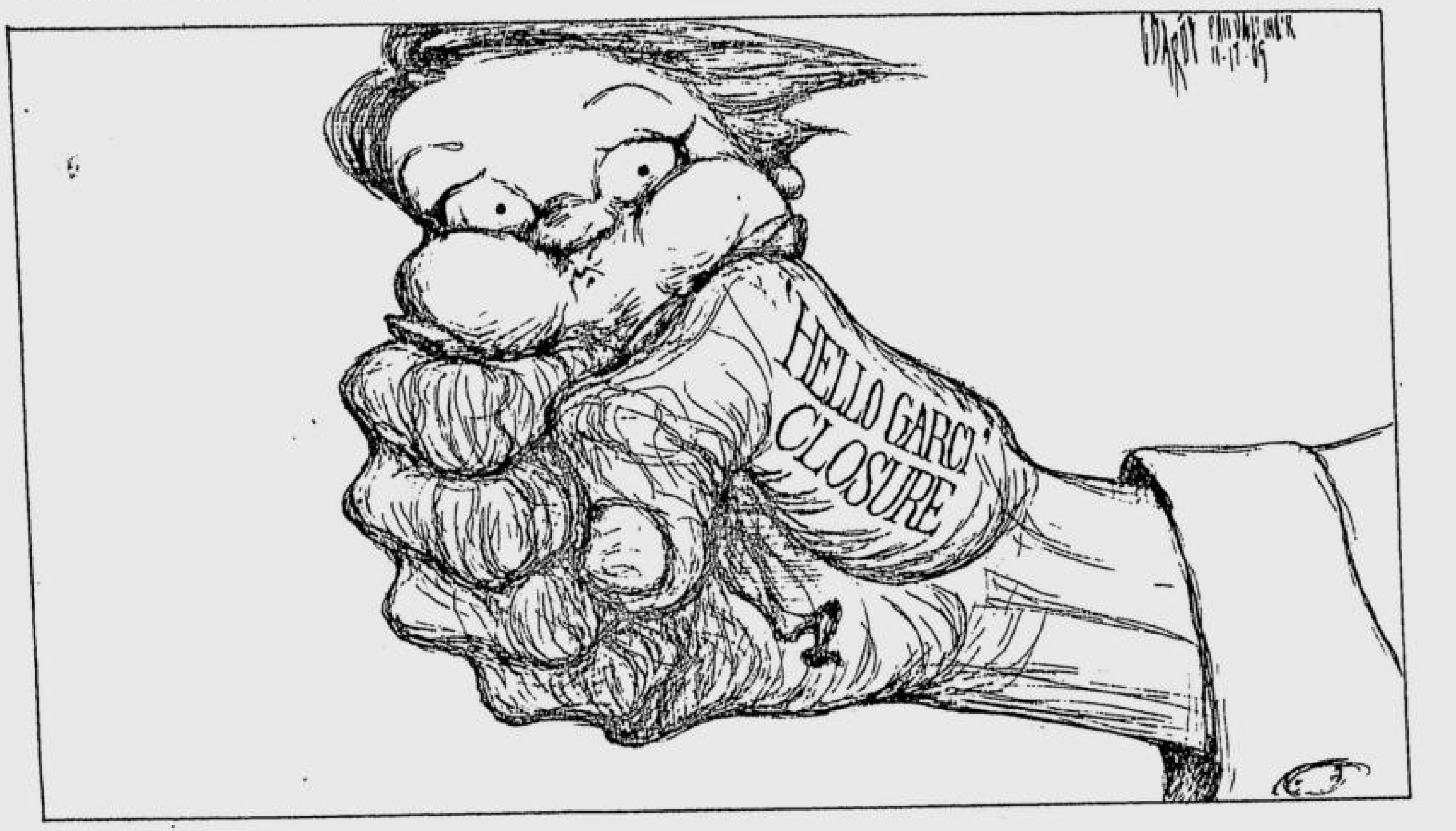


Credit-grabbing

EDITORIAL

EVEN THE PRESIDENT'S MEN APPEAR TO BE EMbarrassed by her fulsome claims of wondrous miracles wrought by the expanded value-added tax on the economy and the lives of Filipinos. While the opposition says the VAT is half-empty, President Macapagal-Arroyo has repeatedly bragged that it isn't only half-full but actually overflowing with benefits for one and all. Which is only half-true at best.

Speaking on government television last Friday, Ms Arroyo said the nation was now "seeing the fruits" of her administration's decision to impose the expanded VAT with the peso getting stronger, helping push down the prices of gasoline, diesel and other oil products. She said confidence in her administration has been "lowering the value of the dollar," and this has "added more reason for fuel prices to go down." "If we did not pass the VAT, the peso would have weakened," she said.

The President also said that contrary to what the opposition had predicted, gasoline prices have gone down instead of up after the VAT was imposed on oil products. "Since Nov. 1, P1.35 per liter has been cut from the price of gasoline and P1.10 per liter for diesel. Diesel is now much cheaper than when there was no EVAT."

She repeated this claim last Tuesday in Carmen, North Cotabato by saying: "The opposition has said that once we implemented the EVAT, the prices of gasoline and diesel will shoot up but that did not come true ... and this is no coincidence but providential because of our implementation of tax reforms."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if indeed imposing the VAT on oil products really did all that? The new law imposed a 10-percent VAT on, among other things, oil products, power and professional fees, which were previously exempt from VAT coverage. When it took effect on Nov. 1, the price per liter of unleaded gasoline rose by P2.37 to P38.42, diesel by 22 centavos to P33.17 and kerosene by P1.40 to P34.91, to cite a few examples. If the imposition of VAT forced the oil companies to adjust their prices by the biggest increments since international crude prices began touching new highs since last year, how could it have pushed prices down two weeks later?

The answer is, it did not. Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, a former student of Ms Arroyo and now one of her economic advisers, has risen to correct his old teacher. Salceda said the VAT did not dampen prices of oil products but actually boosted them. Thus, he said, it would be more accurate to say that the peso has appreciated mainly because of the increased remittances of Filipinos working abroad overseas (up 28 percent during the first eight months alone). And if oil prices are lower, it is because world crude prices have gone down substantially, Salceda said.

Apparently it isn't only Salceda who squirms when he hears the President expound her theory on oil prices. In that TV show last Saturday, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla felt called upon to make a clarification when she said that part of the reason for the fall in oil prices was that US President George Bush heeded her appeal to declare his readiness to use his country's oil reserves. Lotilla said what prompted Bush to order the use of US reserves was the expected disruption in oil supplies caused by two super typhoons, Katrina and Rita.

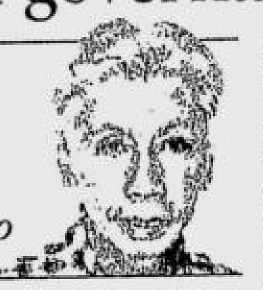
However, Lotilla must have been too shocked to make a similar clarification when the President declared without a hint of hesitation that "the oil-rich countries listened to our request" for them to increase production so that oil prices would go down. All he could say was that the oil-producing countries were projecting higher production next year.

The fact is that prices of crude have been softening in the international market, and more than anything else this is what is driving domestic prices down. Having a strong peso also helps, but local oil companies don't reflect this instantly in their prices, because what they are selling now is oil purchased weeks earlier. But as to Ms Arroyo's great power of persuasion over decision-makers in the world's oil producing countries, this must have been the administration's best kept secret until now.

When oil prices were going up, up and away for just about any reason, the administration pleaded for understanding, saying these were being caused by external factors over which it had no influence. Now that prices have gone down a little, the President is quick to claim credit for herself and her administration. We can't wait to see what she will say when prices move up again.

Begging bowl governance

VIEWPOINT



Juan L. Mercado

"WHOEVER CAPTURES THE PALACE, CAPtures the only government there is." For much of the recent battered past, this old axiom held sway.

Until 1991. That's when the Local Government Code kicked in and started to untangle Malacañang's stranglehold on the tax peso. Whoever the transient Palace tenant is, he or she must, under the Code, transfer part of "Imperial Manila's" cash to local governments.

Dubbed "internal revenue allotments," IRAs kept cash-strapped towns, cities and provincial capitols above water. Indeed, "an empty purse fills the face with wrinkles." IRA flows have more than doubled to today's 79 provinces, 117 cities, 1,500 towns plus 41,956 barangays, spurring growth. People are affected by how local governments perform—or flop.

The World Bank and Asian Development Bank have reviewed this vital sector: "Almost a decade and a half after the landmark Local Government Code, surveys to assess public service satisfaction with public services point to mixed results," the banks report.

The fiscal crunch "has squeezed central transfers," also notes their joint study. And policies on municipal finance have hamstrung (LGU) access to private capital. But there are well-performing LGUs "distinguished by their ability to access resources more effectively," the report adds. Their transparent management reflects a keen sense of accountability.

Some samples: Naga, Cabanatuan and San Fernando developed effective geographical information systems to update their tax data bases. Abra's civic groups exercised people power audits so effectively, they now serve in awards and bids committees. Bulacan regularly reviews accomplishments against targets and budgets.

"Some executives have taken risks outside the certainty of machine politics," the banks note. "(They were) rewarded by clear support from the communities and interest groups, especially by reelection."

IRAs are not a permanent crutch for LGUs. They were to reinforce the LGUs' revenue base: taxes on land, businesses, etc. But many haven't flexed their taxing powers. Instead, most panhandle for IRAs.

Thus, the share of locally raised taxes shriveled: from 31 centavos out of every peso in the mid-'80s to 20 centavos today. And reliance on IRAs is increasing. IRAs used to cover half of local budgets. Today, they provide 63 centavos out of every budgeted peso. "Begging is a decent form of stealing," an Ilocano proverb says.

The IRA begging bowls set off a stampede to clone LGUs. "Cities are eligible for two to three times higher financial resources than towns," the banks note. "As a result, municipalities push for upgrading into cities." In 1990, there were 60 cities. Today, there are 117—and counting.

There could be 87 provinces instead of today's 79—if bills to chop up Cebu, Bukidnon, Quezon, Leyte and Surigao are approved. Chaired by Rep. Emilio Macias, the House committee on local governments has egged on this mindless stampede to provide havens for congressmen whose terms are ending.

This trend "has strained national government's ability to adequately finance such LGUs," the report stressed. "Their relatively small size prevents them from effectively generating their own resources."

Budget Secretary Romulo Neri and Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, meanwhile, reminded LGUs: 20 percent of IRAs should go for "priority items": water, nutrition, medicine, primary schools, farm-to-market roads, etc.

At the Summit on Social Development in Stockholm, over 100 nations backed the "20:20 Pact." That committed us to allocate 20 centavos, out of every tax peso, to meet the urgent human needs of the poorest:

"Human development" spending, the banks noted earlier, would alleviate conditions that "usher more Filipino pre-school children to premature graves than in even poorer countries like Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania or Zimbabwe." Tracking human priority expenditures of governments helps "determine whether they have put their money where their mouth is," UP economist Solita Monsod added.

But some shoved their mouths where the money was. In Cebu, officials in Pinamungajan, Consolacion, Liloan and Manadue City appropriated bonuses for themselves. This safety net for the poorest has been turned into almost an unsupervised mini-pork barrel, an earlier Annual Financial Report on Local Government noted.

The circular would refocus on essentials in a country where "the rich exact what they want and the poor grant what they must," the Philippine Human Development Report 2005 documents that skewed wealth sharing. In Lanao del Norte for example, the richest 10 percent consumes 41 centavos out of every peso. The poorest 10 percent makes do with 2 centavos.

The list of provinces where the elite corners almost a third of consumption include: Antique, Albay, Misamis Oriental and Occidental, South Cotabato, Davao del Sur and Norte, two Mindoros, Camarines del Norte, Cebu, Bohol, Bukidnon, the two Leytes, Palawan, Agusan del Sur, east and west Samar and the two Zamboangas.

The banks' report submits a package of reforms. The reforms range from publishing budgets, periodic reviews of real estate taxes to slicing bloated payrolls. "None of these are new and unfamiliar to Philippine policymakers," the report adds. "(They) focus on actions that could be feasibly completed within six to nine months."

So, how come our officials refuse to get off their butts?

* * *

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Rotten

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

NATIONAL SECURITY CHIEF NORBERTO Gonzales rides again. This is his reaction to incoming CBCP president Angel Lagdameo's comment that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's legitimacy remains an issue and won't go away until it meets with the "proper closure":

"Frankly speaking, what are we complaining about? All the politicians are behaving like, you know, the only mistake of the President probably is she was caught on tape of a particular conversation... The tapes to me are insignificant. What has happened to the President is a reflection of how rotten our political system has become... Condemning the President by making her resign will not correct the damage that we have inflicted on ourselves."

Environment chief Mike Defensor agrees. "I think all avenues have been exhausted."

First, what is Gonzales trying to say? Such as that abject piece of reasoning can be put in a more intelligible way, it is that the politicians themselves agree that what was wrong with what the President did was not that she cheated in the elections but that she was caught doing so. That is the unforgivable sin, though we should have the heart to forgive and, better still, forget. That the opposition should raise a stink about the Hello Garci tapes is the real stinker because it would have done the same thing if it had been in GMA's shoes. That is how rotten our politics has become, that the hypocrites are complaining. Forcing GMA to resign won't solve anything, the rot festers, which we have brought upon ourselves.

Well, to begin with, Joker Arroyo committed two humongous mistakes in letting Gonzales off the hook on the ground that he needed medical attention. The first was believing Gonzales was sick in the body, the second was not believing he was sick in the mind. But, of course, Gonzales would find the Hello Garci tapes insignificant. If you can see nothing wrong in hiring an American PR firm for hundreds of millions of pesos to try to convince the US Congress to fund us to rewrite our Constitution, you will see nothing wrong in calling up a Comelec commissioner in the thick of the counting to make sure you win by a million votes. And Ignacio Bunye was so incensed that the senators compared Gonzales to a pimp. He should hear what the pimps have to say about being compared to Gonzales.

The politicians think that the real crime is not cheating but being caught? Then let us line them up against the wall too, metaphorically speaking, of course, though these days you are tempted not to mind having that in literal form. Why should the notion, even if true—that the opposition would steal the vote, too, given half the chance—justify stealing the vote? The fact that presidents pillaged before does not make plunder acceptable. The fact that soldiers raped before does not make the rape of the woman by an American serviceman in Subic excusable. The fact that candidates cheated before does not make GMA talking to Garci embraceable.

While at this, as I said in a past column, though presidents did cheat before, the results of the elections were never disbelieved. Incumbents did not win anyway, except for Marcos, who won a second time, equally convincingly. Which suggests that the cheating was never that wholesale to affect the outcome. It is only today we have a President no one believes to have won, except by people like Gonzales and Defensor.

What is wrong with Defensor's statement, "I think all avenues have been exhausted"? There are two words. The first is "think," the second is "exhausted." He isn't thinking, and all avenues have not been exhausted, they have merely been blocked. Or at least only the avenues open to redress have been blocked. All the avenues allowing criminals like Virgilio Garcillano and his coconspirator to escape remain open. You have a missing Garci, you have a Gudani and Balutan being court-martialed for testifying GMA robbed the voters of Muslim Mindanao blind, and you talk of all avenues being exhausted?

All the killing of the impeachment bid by Congress has done is to show that, as in Marcos' time, an illegitimate president can always use the law to thwart the law. A tyrant can always use the law to foment lawlessness. It also not quite incidentally offers the perfect refutation to Fidel Ramos' argument that the nice thing about a parliamentary system is that you don't have to impeach a leader who sucks, that can be done by parliament calling for a loss of confidence. The opposite in fact is more likely to be true of our parliament: It can always prop up a leader who sucks, or who cheated massively in the elections, with a bought vote. With this current Congress serving as the core of the future parliament, what we'll have is mob rule and not the rule of law.

Gonzales is right about how rotten our politics has become, he is wrong about how it has come to be so. The public has not made it so; he, Defensor, and their boss have made it so. What we are experiencing today is not just corruption of staggering proportions (how else call turning this country into the second most corrupt in Asia?) but rottenness of colossal dimensions (how else call suggesting that a crime lies in getting caught and not in its commission?). It is not just the decay of the body, it is the decay of the soul. This government isn't just stealing every bit of the national wealth, it is stealing every shred of Filipino decency. GMA and her gang aren't just lying, cheating and stealing, they are encouraging everyone to do so.

Incoming CBCP president Angel Lagdameo (richly named, as indeed his predecessor, Fernando Capalla) is right: The issue of GMA's legitimacy won't disappear without a proper closure. What that proper closure is, well, only the Battle of the Brainless will produce different answers to a word that begins with "R."

Compromise solution at SC?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE RACE FOR THE SUPREME COURT'S TOP post, soon to be vacated by Chief Justice Hilario Davide, is said to be boiling down to two candidates—Justices Reynato Puno and Artemio Panganiban, who are both close to President Macapagal-Arroyo's heart. It may be recalled that Panganiban worked closely with Davide to prevent a critical vacuum in leadership by having GMA sworn in on Jan. 21, 2001. Puno, on the other hand, penned the decision upholding the legality of her assumption to office, and I understand he had a big hand in recruiting colleagues to form a decisive majority. Because of the closeness of both jurists to GMA, a compromise is said to be brewing. The 69-year-old Panganiban would be given the top post and, after his mandatory retirement at the end of 2006, Puno would be appointed to serve until his retirement three and a half years later.

* * *

Earlier, I wrote that, as in the military, seniority should not be the only criterion in selecting the chief justice. I cited examples in our judicial history as well as abroad, notably the selection by President Bush of a very young appellate judge, John Roberts, to be US chief justice. I should mention that the members of the US Senate, on whom rests the power to confirm presidential appointments, were so impressed with Roberts that they voted 78-22 to confirm him, meaning, well over half of the Democrats crossed party lines.

* * *

In last Tuesday's issue of the Philippine Star, former Senate President Jovito Salonga disclosed the alleged pressure brought to bear upon resigned Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, specifically in relation to the gross overprice of the purchase of nearly 2,000 automated counting machines in 2003. Salonga reportedly told Marcelo of "rumors buzzing in the whole city" about how First Gentleman Mike Arroyo had asked him not to prosecute the Comelec commissioners in an effort to protect them. He said Marcelo "did not categorically deny" the rumor and instead replied, "*Kaya nga po gusto ko nang mag-resign. Gusto ko na lang tapusin ang* Erap plunder case *sa* Sandiganbayan (That's why I want to resign. I just want to finish the Erap plunder case in the Sandiganbayan)."

* * *

Salonga's disclosure drives home the point about how tough the job of Ombudsman can be. Which is why I do have some misgivings about the reported incoming Ombudsman, Merceditas Gutierrez. Marcelo, who wasn't really directly associated with the First Couple prior to his appointment, was said to have had difficulty standing up to pressures, opting instead to quit. How much more Gutierrez who had worked closely with the President and was a law classmate of the First Gentleman?

Those who know her, however, feel quite confident that as a principled woman she can withstand the pressures of the job. It's said that her role model in her unblemished career has always been her own father, a graft buster in his heyday. Her friends also like to point out that Chief Justice Davide was appointed by President Estrada, but he was able to preside impartially over Erap's impeachment trial. Her friends say the lady might just surprise us all with her impartiality. Let's hope so.

* * *

Let's have a moratorium during the next two weeks of the 23rd SEA Games which our country is hosting. Let's instead try our best to support our athletes, principally by cheering their performance in as many events as we can. We Pinoys will miss the basketball event after the SEA Games organizing committee and the International Basketball Federation failed to resolve some disagreement. But there are many other exciting events that will be held in various parts of Metro Manila and Region 3, as well as in Cebu and Bacolod. For instance, tennis will be in the Rizal Memorial Coliseum, swimming and diving in Los Baños, dancesport in Cebu City, mountain biking in Danao City, road cycling in Tagaytay City, men's football in Bacolod City, women's football in Marikina, arnis and wushu in Emilio Aguinaldo College in Manila, badminton in Pasig City and kayaking in Subic. The Games' full schedule will be published in the dailies and fully covered by TV.

Transporting athletes and officials to various places could be a logistics nightmare, but the plus side is that tourism will receive a huge boost with the foreign coverage. Local government officials in the various cities hosting sports events are coordinating with Games officials to ensure the success of the games in their respective areas. Orchids to them all.

* * *

For all bazaar lovers and shoppers: Marche International Foundation will put up a very big bazaar this Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 19-20, at the Makati Sports Club, Alfaro Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City. It will be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Myrna N. Alimurung, committee head of the 2005 Marche International Bazaar, and Yu Ming Chin, bazaar coordinator, have given assurance that a wide variety of products from local sources as well as from Germany, Italy, Spain, India, Bangkok, the United States, China and others will be put on sale at reasonable aprices. They will include wellness products, apparel, handicrafts, baskets, hats, pottery, jewelry, export and imported Christmas décor, religious items, leather, cosmetics, food items and musical instruments. There'll be all-day dining as well as free juice-tasting and organic wine-tasting, courtesy of Drysdale and Healthy Options, respectively. There will also be a raffle. Credit cards will be accepted. This mother of all bazaars is to be held for the benefit of Don Bosco Manpower Foundation Inc., Youth of San Antonio, Taguyod Foundation and Serviam Catholic Charismatic Community. For inquiries, call 844-4405/637-5639, or 0917-536-8413 and 0917-526-0517.

Rape a violent crime of conquest

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

> *"Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times. From prehistoric times to the present, rape has played a critical function. It is a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."*
>
> **—Susan Brownmiller, "Against Our Will"**

STEREOTYPICAL RAPE SCENES AS DEPICTED in movies and *komiks* do happen in real life. *Ginahasa sa cogonan* (raped amid tall grass) or ginahasa sa sagingan (raped in a banana grove) aren't imaginary scenes used to simply add color to lewd narratives; they actually and quite commonly take place in those proverbial places.

Tricycle drivers waylaying and then raping their young passengers have become stereotypical. Not that tricycle drivers are generally the raping kind. Maybe they just easily make it to the news because they have nowhere to run. They end up beaten up by the victims' kin at police stations and in front of TV cameras, unlike the powerful types who could run away aboard their SUVs.

US servicemen raping "the natives" should now be stereotypical, too, if we go by the statistics that Sen. Francis Pangilinan cited—3,000 rape cases against Americans have been dismissed in the Olongapo City court. I would presume that the cases were mostly against uniformed men.

Lawyer Katrina Legarda (who sent a congressman to jail for raping a minor) is handling the case of the young woman allegedly raped by five US soldiers last Nov. 1. She has reason to worry and seek the transfer of the case to Manila.

There have been reactions to the media's stress on the fact that the victim was not, repeat, not a sex worker. Women's groups have repeatedly pointed out that prostitute or not, drunk or not, a woman does not deserve to be raped. The INQUIRER had clarified that the headline stating the victim was not a sex worker was merely a quoted reaction to an American's argument that the victim had it coming.

Years ago, I went to Bilibid's Death Row to interview prisoners on the rape that they had been convicted of. Of the 11 I interviewed, only two owned up. I could get so lucky. Facing the prospect of death (the death penalty had then been revived) or a long life behind bars didn't seem to change their views.

"But I paid her," related Alex (not his real name), 38, a convicted rapist serving his sentence (reclusion perpetua). Alex said it rather casually, with nary a hint of remorse or indignation. He seemed to have accepted his prison sentence with resignation.

Alex, a jeepney driver, raped Nina, a 13-year-old schoolgirl, inside a jeepney parked in a cogon field. "I was plying the Cubao-Antipolo route," Alex narrated. "I picked up many passengers along the way and as I was nearing Antipolo, the passengers started to get off one by one. It was late in the afternoon and it was raining.

"When I reached the end of my route I noticed this schoolgirl who hadn't gotten off. She had taken the wrong jeep. She asked me for directions, where she could take a ride back. I said I'd bring her to a waiting station."

Alex didn't. He brought her to a cogon field. According to him, he parked his jeepney and offered the girl money—P50—if she would have sex with him. She refused repeatedly. "Later, she consented," Alex said. He didn't have to force her, he claimed. It took all of 10 minutes.

Alex drove back to town with the girl who was near tears. He remembered dropping her off in front of a restaurant. Unknown to him, the girl sought the help of the restaurant owner who lost no time and brought the girl to the police. A few weeks later Alex was nabbed.

Alex and 11 other men were lined up before the victim for identification, but Nina failed to identify her rapist. The lineup was reduced to six, then to three and then to two. Still Nina could not identify the rapist. "It was when I spoke that she identified me," Alex said. "She recognized my voice."

Alex pleaded not guilty to the charge of rape, arguing that the victim had accepted the money. But he was found guilty just the same. It was proven that Alex had sex with Nina against her consent. She may not have had the telltale signs of struggle to ward off her molester, but Nina's lawyers argued that she had been intimidated and she ran the risk of being harmed had she refused.

And why did Alex do it? "It just suddenly entered my head." It wasn't premeditated. He's had nights out with prostitutes, he told me, and so it wasn't as if he was so "starved." But, he wanted a virgin, he added. And what did Alex think of women in general? "They are weaker than men," he answered. Violence against women has been perennially committed because of that thinking.

Rape is no longer a "private crime." The Anti-Rape Law of 1997 classifies rape as "a crime against persons." For so long, rape had been considered merely as "a crime against chastity." This seemed to suggest that persons who were unchaste were fair game.

The crime of rape should have nothing to do with the chastity of the victim. Rape is not merely a sexual offense or a crime against chastity but a crime against persons and against the State. As one feminist lawyer said, "Rape is not a crime against the hymen. It is a crime against the whole person."

It is a crime of the strong against the weak, a crime of conquest. Speaking of conquest, the rape of a 22-year-old Filipina in Subic last Nov. 1 takes on a metaphorical color because the alleged perpetrators are citizens of a former colonizing nation.

We will be watching. We wish Katrina Legarda and her legal team strength of heart, endurance, light.

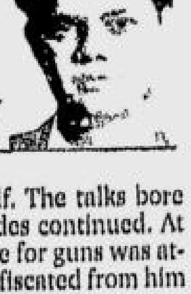
* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Politics most foul

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



NOV. 30 WILL BE BONIFACIO DAY, BUT IT WILL be commemorated with little meaning. This year's observance will differ little from other landmark historical events, such as the 101st anniversary of the Tejeros Convention, which was observed in 1998 in a ceremony held at the Estate-House (restored by the Armed Forces of the Philippines). Speeches were made, and a full-page ad was placed in major papers.

The truth is that the Tejeros Convention remains one of the most contentious events of the Philippine Revolution, marking as it did, Emilio Aguinaldo's rise to supremacy and Supremo Andres Bonifacio's fall.

The verdict of history has long been one unfavorable to Aguinaldo, dating back to Mabini's view that the execution of Bonifacio (the outcome of his fall from power) "was the first victory of personal ambition over true patriotism."

The peerless historian and thinker Onofre Corpuz (no one really noticed he was made a National Scientist in 2004) views the events of Tejeros in a more pragmatic light. Tejeros was the culmination of a bitter fight that stemmed from the self-elevation of the Caviteños' Magdalo faction to the status of a provincial council. As Corpuz puts it, "The setting up by the Magdalo of a second provincial council, apparently without official Katipunan sanction, when there was already a sanctioned council, was something of an anomaly." Making things worse, on Aug. 31, 1896, the Magdiwang proclaimed itself a revolutionary government. The Magdalo followed suit.

Things got worse. The great-grandfathers of today's white papers began to circulate, spreading malicious gossip about Supremo Bonifacio (who had arrived in Cavite and promptly taken the side of the Magdiwang) and Aguinaldo. An attempt to sort things out on Dec. 26, 1896 ended in an impasse; the Magdiwang considered that unity must lie in accepting the Katipunan constitution as the charter of the new government; the Magdalo insisted the Katipunan was a secret society whose reason for being (to plot and prepare for a general revolt) had been superseded by the outbreak of the revolution itself. The talks bore no fruit; the slander on both sides continued. At one point, Bonifacio (whose love for guns was attested by the list of firearms confiscated from him when he was arrested) nearly shot Mariano Trias (who later became a general).

Then the Spaniards began an offensive that would send the revolutionaries into retreat. It was during this period of military reversals that the Tejeros Convention took place. Bonifacio was there; Aguinaldo, whose brother would be killed in battle three days later, was not.

The convention was conducted in a style that should be familiar to us today: acrimonious and full of rhetoric. After restating the Katipunan position that it was the legitimate revolutionary government and its constitution the real charter, Bonifacio acceded to the creation of a new government; the rest is well-known: Aguinaldo was elected president, Mariano Trias vice president, Artemio Ricarte became captain-general; Bonifacio lost his temper when his election as director of the interior was contested ("In violation of the rules," says Corpuz); Bonifacio then declared the elections null and void, nearly shot the man who contested his election, and stalked out.

Events unfolded swiftly. In a few days, Aguinaldo was sworn in, the Pamahalaan ng Sangkatagalugan was proclaimed: the new regime was swift in bureaucratizing matters. Magdiwang and Magdalo members alike were obliged to show their licenses (issued by the new government) to carry arms. By May 10, Bonifacio was dead, following the issuance of an order for his arrest, trial and execution.

Of Bonifacio, all we have are the records of the court that convicted him, written in the second-person of the law; leaving us, as his statement to posterity, an account shorn of the eloquence that caused his generation to risk their lives for the revolution:

"Asked whether in that meeting at Tejeros, Emilio Aguinaldo had been elected President, he replied that because confusion reigned at the time, nothing resulted therefrom and the matters taken up were declared null and void, including the topics taken up by the Magdiwang Ministers and the election of Artemio Ricarte as the commander-in-chief of the Tagalog provinces, all of which resulted in proving that irregularities were committed and that anything taken up did not express the will of the people; thus, he was not in a position to say that General Emilio Aguinaldo had been elected President of the whole archipelago."

Corpuz maintains that Tejeros marked an inevitable watershed in all revolutions, "when there has to be a contest for leadership—not for military preeminence... but for primacy in the politics of the revolution, wherein strength, shrewdness, and one's stars must settle the conflicting claims." Such showdowns would occur again and again, except that they would in a political arena, with a veneer of restraint. But of Tejeros itself, the lesson may be a simple one, captured in a parenthetical remark by Corpuz: "(I)t is still a truism in modern-day Philippine politics that no President of the Republic gains anything by interfering in contests between provincial political chieftains." Nothing romantic in that; but then the legacies of great events are often found in the mundane and in the pragmatic considerations of leadership.

* * *

PLDT was kind enough to attend to my DSL concerns on the day my column came out. They have promised to set up a task force to attend to other subscribers with similar DSL concerns. If you have any concerns you'd like them to know of, e-mail me at mlquezon3@pldt.com and I'll forward it to PLDT for action.

Mixed blessing

YOUNG BLOOD

Ramon Lorenzo Luis R. Guinto

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

YESTERDAY, FOREIGN REBELS HELD HOSTAGE AN OVERseas worker. Today, a new girl diva released her most-awaited single. Tomorrow, our country may suffer a fate similar to Argentina's.

These are events that have occurred, are occurring, and can recur in the endless cycle of history, episodes in the daily drama involving both the renowned and the unknown, events that may be remote from our lives as young individuals.

Busy as we are with a lot of things, we the youth are apt to become unaware or forgetful of events taking place around us. Most of the time, we ignore these issues as we focus on our tasks as students or enjoy the pleasures that our youth legitimizes for us.

But we cannot completely shut out the things that are happening in our country. Thanks to the mass media that bring to our awareness the different forces interacting in society. Thanks to the mass media that act as a magnifying glass to show us pictures of life in its dynamic forms—its joys and sorrows, triumphs and defeats, abundance and famine. Thanks to the mass media that make us aware and give us images of the protests and demands of militant groups, the inefficiency and dishonesty of some public officials, the deprivations of the poor, the indulgences of the rich. All these are brought to our consciousness by television, by commentaries over radio, and sometimes by opinion-makers in the newspapers.

Without the mass media, our government could not have negotiated swiftly with Iraqi rebels who had the power of life and death over Angelo dela Cruz a year ago. We would live melancholy lives amid our sad predicaments if not for our friendly radio and the music it brings. We could not have begun to see the need to tighten our belts if there were no newspapers to reveal to us the real state of our nation and enlightening us about the fiscal crisis, the factors that send prices of commodities soaring and the graft and corruption attending the use of public funds. The mass media impart to us vital facts that are necessary for our physical and social survival, through reliable and up-to-date news and reminders. The mass media provide readers, viewers and listeners the means for relaxation, meditation and learning, through lifestyle columns, educational shows and even soap operas. The mass media also try to capture our sentiments and predict our prospects for the future. These things, in addition to endless stories of victories and defeats, of celebrations and tribulations, invade our consciousness, rouse us out of our ignorance, indifference or insensitivity and summon us to fight the ills plaguing humanity. Thanks to the wide-seeing cameras, the sensitive recorders, the mighty pens.

While we must acknowledge the benefits that the mass media provide, we, the young people, must also be wary of the fact that they can also bring harm. It is disheartening to learn that based on recent statistics, an average child sees 12,000 violent acts on television annually, that 75 percent of music videos played on TV contain sexually explicit materials, while commercials for healthy food make up only 4 percent of food advertisements shown during children's usual viewing hours. The mass media that expose us to pleasant realities also show the atrocities and immorality that a large portion of mankind practice. The monstrous giant that is the mass media can control our consciousness and influence our behavior in ways that are harmful to us.

This is not what mass media should be. Being an ubiquitous and powerful instrument for shaping young people's minds, the mass media should be a channel of truth, a voice of the people and a catalyst for change and progress. But the sad truth is that the mass media do not always function this way, and so the youth, like you and me, must try to tame this beast. And this we can do mainly by being selective and prudent in the use of this tool so that we will gather the benefits that they are supposed to provide.

Parents, teachers and elders should guide the youth so that they will be exposed only to the kind of mass media that promote not a culture of death but a culture of life. They should provide us guidance and protect us from the harm that violence and sex on television and other mass media can do. If they are holding positions of authority, they should start thinking about how to regulate the savagery and malice that pervade movies and television shows. They should see to it that the youth's role models do not impart the wrong values.

If I am making this appeal now, it is because I still believe in the goodness and life-changing power of the mass media.

As a child of the 21st century, I feel blessed because we have the mass media to expose the realities of life today. I have learned so much from educational and informative TV shows that I used to watch nightly. I have been kept up to date about development around the world by my radio. And I have been enlightened on the issues by the editorial pages of newspapers. I am grateful for the advanced technology that help immensely in my intellectual formation. When I think of the future, I am confident I can push the frontier of knowledge because the mass media are there to help me.

Ramon Lorenzo Luis R. Guinto, 17, is a freshman in the Integrated Liberal Arts-Medicine (Intarmed) Program of the University of the Philippines Manila-College of Medicine.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

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THEY SAID

Corrupt business sector

"My brutally frank but nonetheless factual assessment is this: the non-life insurance industry of the country today has, over the years, deteriorated into one of the most corrupt sectors of business in the entire nation."

—Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile on the discrepancy between reported compulsory third-party liability policies sold each year and the amount booked by the insurance industry

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Rosales' lapse in judgment

WAS DISGUSTED AND GREATly disappointed with Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales' position on the dispersal of a rally led by three bishops. (PDI, 10/20/05)

Rosales has been in the archdiocese for quite some time now. He must have observed and known for himself the irregularities committed by the Arroyo administration before, during and after the 2004 elections.

The patent abuse of power to attain a self-serving objective, the widespread unmitigated corruption in government could not have escaped his discerning mind. But, no ecclesiastical voice has been heard denouncing the clandestine acts to minimize, if not prevent, these evils.

Thanks to the militant groups. Together with patriotic and nationalistic Filipinos, including some discerning Church officials, they have taken the place of the apathetic pillars of our moral and social order by taking the cudgels for the oppressed and repressed.

Now, comes Rosales. As a good shepherd of his flock, he should have defended the legitimate cause for which the protesters are fighting for. He calls for orderliness, but he overlooks the disorder wreaked by the corrupt and abusive Arroyo administration.

My good bishop, let us be fair in our fight for truth and justice without which there can never be peace in this country under a sinful administration whose God is power, money and Satan, the purveyor of lies and deceit.

It is worth mentioning, that while the good bishop scores the government for lack of vision, yet, it's only now that he and his clergy are mapping out the vision of the archdiocese. I would like to think that his pronouncement is a "lapse in judgment."

—PROJECTO T. TOMAGAN,
19-A B. Mariano St.,
Sta. Ana, San Mateo, Rizal

Pfizer's objections based on public safety

WE WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY certain points raised in the column (Cocktales) of Vic Agustin "Viagra, meet Andros." (PDI, 11/14/05)

He said: "The launch was originally scheduled early last month, but, as Unilab research chief Kenny Dee broadly hinted in his lecture, Pfizer had even sought to stop Unilab's importation of the vital ingredient sildenafil from the European manufacturer."

For everyone's information, before a product may be imported into the country, a Certificate of Product Registration (CPR) issued by the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) is required. During the time referred to, Pfizer's Viagra was the only sildenafil citrate registered at the BFAD. Thus, only Pfizer was authorized to import the ingredient into the country.

He also said: "Legally, Pfizer could not prevent Unilab from manufacturing a bioequivalent version of its multibillion-dollar seller, with the earlier decision of the US multinational to no longer file a molecular patent with the local authorities."

Please be advised that in the Philippines, Viagra is protected by a patent covering the process by which it is manufactured. Hence, other companies can only manufacture sildenafil citrate by using a different process.

Pfizer is not against the entry of generic sildenafil. The objections we raised were based on public safety. We are questioning the registration of the product until such time that thorough safety evaluation and validation, including adequate laboratory tests, are done to ensure that it is not harmful to patients.

During the research and development of Viagra, Pfizer scientists discovered a way to manufacture Viagra through a process that produces the least number of impurities in the finished product. This process ensures that Viagra is safe and effective. Based on the thorough studies of Pfizer, other processes were found to produce certain chemicals and impurities that may possibly cause serious side effects for patients.

In fact, the Department of Health has agreed to convene a panel of experts to review the process which the BFAD utilized in granting registration approval for Unilab's sildenafil citrate.

At this point, it cannot be concluded that Andros and Viagra are the same medicine. Pfizer specifically stated that while generic medicines may have the same active ingredients, the process in which a product is made can impact on the drug's safety and efficacy.

We trust that by raising these points, we helped clarify Pfizer's stand on the entry of generic sildenafil in the Philippines.

—KAREN A. VILLANUEVA,
corporate affairs director,
Pfizer, Makati City

LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Blocked avenues for seeking redress

I BEG TO DISAGREE WITH your columnist, Solita Monsod when she wrote, among others, in her column, titled "Stench of hypocrisy" (PDI, 10/22/05): "Let us remind ourselves, please, that the 'parliament of the streets' was born under martial law because all avenues (Congress, the courts, the media) for seeking redress of grievances were blocked from us."

Precisely, several years before martial law was declared on Sept. 21, 1972 by then President Marcos, numerous student rallies were held in Manila and in the provinces.

As a matter of fact, the First Quarter Storm which led to the attack by students of Congress and Malacañang occurred prior to martial law. I actually participated in that fateful event, together with some 30 jeeploads of students from UP Los Baños.

Likewise, I remember, long before martial law was proclaimed, that we (a delegation of UP College of Forestry faculty and student leaders) were even allowed to get inside Malacañang Park to air our protest over the appointment by President Marcos of a Bureau of Forestry director, the late Antonio Quejado, who was a nonforester.

It was no less than then Executive Secretary Rafael Salas who permitted our group to enter the Palace grounds where we delivered our speeches denouncing Quejado's appointment.

—CRISOSTOMO B. VILAR,
vice mayor, Pagsanjan, Laguna

Hotel's side on Bolante's slip

WE RESPECTFULLY WRITE IN connection with the news report titled "Ex-agri usec gives Senate the slip." (PDI/10/22/05)

We are gravely concerned about allusions in some publications that the hotel did something irregular when the Senate served the summons on Jocelyn Bolante last Oct. 21. We vehemently deny this.

A careful reading of the incident report (such reports are filed by hotel personnel as standard operating procedure whenever an unusual incident occurs in the premises of the hotel) would clearly show that the hotel exercised due diligence in respecting the rights and concerns of all the parties concerned. Thus the Senate, through its agents, was able to serve the summons through the counsel of Bolante, lawyer Antonio Zulueta.

As soon as hotel personnel were advised by the Senate sergeant at arms, Nelson Dimayuga, of his purpose, they assisted him and his group in the orderly service of the summons.

It was not the hotel security personnel but the sergeant at arms of the Rotary International who stopped the Senate process servers and the media from entering the Grand Plaza Ballroom. The hotel personnel merely ushered the media to the wider lobby so that they would not block the entrance to the Grand Plaza Ballroom. The hotel personnel never asked anyone, especially the Senate process servers, to leave the hotel premises.

It is certainly beyond the hotel's concern if what the Senate process servers did, i.e., hand the summons to Zulueta, was not sufficient service, or that Bolante would now question the sufficiency of the service of the summons. The hotel personnel were not privy to the conversation between the Senate representatives and Zulueta. More importantly, the Senate process servers did not require the hotel to do anything else. Neither did the hotel personnel disobey any of the Senate agents' instructions. The latter even apologized to the hotel personnel for their surprise visit.

We hope that we have clearly explained that the hotel has not done anything irregular in connection with the service of the Senate summons for Bolante.

—PAOLO CAMPILLO,
general manager,
The Westin Philippine Plaza,
CCP Complex,
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

Rape not just a spectacle of sexism

LEAVE IT TO PHILIPPINE MEDIA to turn yet another rape case into a spectacle of sexism.

The rape of a young woman in Subic by yet another US serviceman has been extensively covered by a host of reporters with the usual fervor, raising the alarm for justice to be served. But in the process, reporting has highlighted the fact that the woman is "not a bar girl," or "sex worker." ("Raped girl no sex worker," PDI, 11/5/05)

Pray tell, what if the victim were a sex worker? Would she have deserved such a fate?

This is an old story. Media, by failing to check their own sexist biases, have perpetuated the age old sexist categorization of "good women" and "bad women" in Philippine society.

Behind this story is media's 'falling all over themselves in trying to project the unspeakable outrage that a rape does and can shake up; but at the same time, still generally pegging the blame on women who fail to meet "the standard" of "rapability."

Rape is sexual violence perpetrated against both women and men, but by virtue of sexism and gender inequality, it is widely perpetrated against women by men. (Notably, men who do get raped are also raped by other men.)

It is precisely this whole notion of the hierarchy between the sexes, women's powerlessness and the acceptance of male sexual domination that characterizes rape as sexism at its very worst. When a woman is raped, it is her consent, her dignity as a human being, her right and power to say no that are violated.

Unfortunately, by their own accounting of the story, many in media still peg sexual violence against women as a crime against the mythical hymen (a.k.a. virginity or sexual inexperience) and not against the women themselves.

No doubt, this woman deserves justice and, whatever her circumstances, her rights remain the same.

—CAROLINA S. RUIZ AUSTRIA,
consultant for program development,
Womenlead Foundation Inc.,
karolzki@gmail.com

Not just an issue of numbers

TRULY INSULTING IS SOLITA Monsod's Oct. 29 column, which was nothing more than a litany of statistics to show that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo won the 2004 presidential election. She ends up the litany by saying that "Given all these, the bottom line is: Like it or not, Ms Arroyo is our legitimate President."

Why then is GMA moving heaven and earth to cover up, among others, the "Hello Garci" and fertilizer fund controversies? Characteristic of the administration's strategy is to take the Filipino people on a merry-go-round trip. Monsod's entire column is a waste of INQUIRER paper because the Filipino people have gone beyond the election protest issue. The people want to know the truth, and Monsod's litany isn't going to satisfy anyone. Like a great flood flowing toward the ocean, the issue can't simply be brought back to who-had-the-numbers.

At this point, even assuming that GMA did get the numbers, the "Hello Garci" tapes (including the Bunye version), the fertilizer fund issue and every attempt at a cover-up and at blocking investigations all work together to make sure she will not get the people's confidence until her next impeachment case is filed next year. A winning cheater is a disqualified winner, no, a disqualified candidate.

—GILBERT CUNANAN,
gilbs72@yahoo.com

Defensor should resign

THE IMPOSITION OF THE LOGging moratorium in Samar in the late 1980s was hailed as a milestone in the exercise of political will by then President Cory Aquino and Environment Secretary Fulgencio Factoran against powerful economic interests. Now, the same agency that Factoran headed is saying that the imposition of the logging moratorium was an unjustified error. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources would rather give "prior vested rights" greater legal protection than the collective sentiments and welfare of the people of Samar.

The implications—legal and environmental—of incumbent Environment Secretary Michael Defensor's decision will be tremendous and far-reaching. The decision will open the floodgates for other powerful interests to exploit the resources of the island for their own benefit. There are at least two or three firms with mining claims antedating the moratorium. They will definitely use the same "prior vested rights" to the thousands of hectares of forests inside the protected area. And God knows the destruction these claims will bring to the livelihood of Samar folks once these firms start extracting the minerals in the bowels of Samar Island.

Defensor should see for himself how zealously the Samareños guard and protect their resources, their only means of overcoming government neglect since who knows when.

Will government again summon the likes of Gen. Jovito Palparan to "pacify" the legendary collective sense of the Samareños? It's really a pity—only in the Arroyo administration have we seen such callousness that puts individual interests above people's weal.

Defensor should resign ahead of his boss for his ineptness and insensitivity and save this country from further destruction. So much for intellectual dishonesty Mr. Secretary. Leave your post now.

—LITO DAVID,
lydavid79@yahoo.com

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"Hello Garci" is not Dead.

Unite And Fight For What Is Right.

For far too long have we as a people suffered.
At the end of the Pacific War, ours was one of the most devastated of nations.
Slowly, our people struggled to rebuild their lives and their institutions of democracy.
And for many of our Southeast Asian neighbors, our programs and structures served as model which they replicated.

Yet today, the Philippines has become a country where more than 40% of the population live in abject poverty, and nearly another 30% are further marginalized.
We are unable to provide adequately for the health and welfare of our people.
Our educational standards, once the envy of our neighbors, has deteriorated to the point where the future of our youth has been greatly imperiled.
Justice has become a commodity available only to the rich and the powerful.
Criminality stalks our cities and insurgency festers in our countryside.
We are ranked the second most corrupt nation in Asia.
survives on a lifeline provided by our overseas workers who are forced to live in difficult alien environments for the sake of their family's survival, suffering the grave social costs of family separation and division.
teeters on bankruptcy as our government borrows more and more to finance unsustainable deficit spending.

All of us who have been cheated in that electoral exercise believe that it is the sovereign Filipino people who have been truly cheated.

But more damaging than just material impoverishment is the crisis of morality that has pervaded our entire society.
Visions, programs and leaders have come and gone, but we keep sinking under the weight of corruption.
We have closed our eyes to the fundamental principle that good governance can only be founded on moral righteousness.

For far too long have we tolerated political leadership that is amoral, unable to see what is right, and unwilling to do what is right. Instead, we have closed our eyes to the wrongs they commit before the very public they are sworn to serve.

In sufferance, we even seem to accept a pretender to the presidency who steals, cheats and lies, and continues to do so with impunity in order to remain in illegitimate office.
We suffer the continued stay of the pretender because we keep asking about the alternative, and so the status quo prevails.

Edmund Burke has said, "the only way for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing".
The Bible declares the same principle in different fashion: "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do, and doesn't do it, sins." (James 4:17)

In the national elections of 2004, five major candidates offered to serve the Philippines as president.
One cheated and is deemed disqualified, and has been rejected by the people as one should rightfully be in any fair and legitimate proceeding.
Two have gone on to the bosom of the Lord.

All of us who have been cheated in that electoral exercise believe that it is the sovereign Filipino people who have been truly cheated.

In order to right the perfidious wrong committed against the people, we have encouraged submission to the impeachment processes defined under our Constitution.
But the pretender and her accomplices have aborted the same, and continue to lie and dissemble before the nation and the world.
Now they call on all of us to "move on", to forget the wrongs, to falsely hope that material progress can come under a regime founded on a lie and bereft of right. In short, they want this nation under God to live a lie.

If hope in our collective future as a nation and as a people are to be resurrected, we must require the sacrifice, willing or forced, of those who have committed the most atrocious of public sins, which is the stealing of the people's sovereign will.

It is because of a shared commitment to fight for what is right, that we, who then offered ourselves to serve the nation, now jointly call on our people to unite for the restoration of morality and righteousness in governance and leadership, and the rejection of corruption in all forms, so that our beloved Philippines may yet fulfill the great destiny that God has ordained.
It is He who appoints leaders and kings, and He who removes them.

We declare our willingness to serve this nation and our people in any capacity that the Lord gives, and call on our people, from all sectors and walks of life, to unite and fight for what is right.

For God said, "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to My people" (Prov 14:34).

Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson
Be Not Afraid Movement
Sinag ng Bayan
Soldiers for Peace and Progress

Bro. Eddie Villanueva
Bangon Pilipinas Movement
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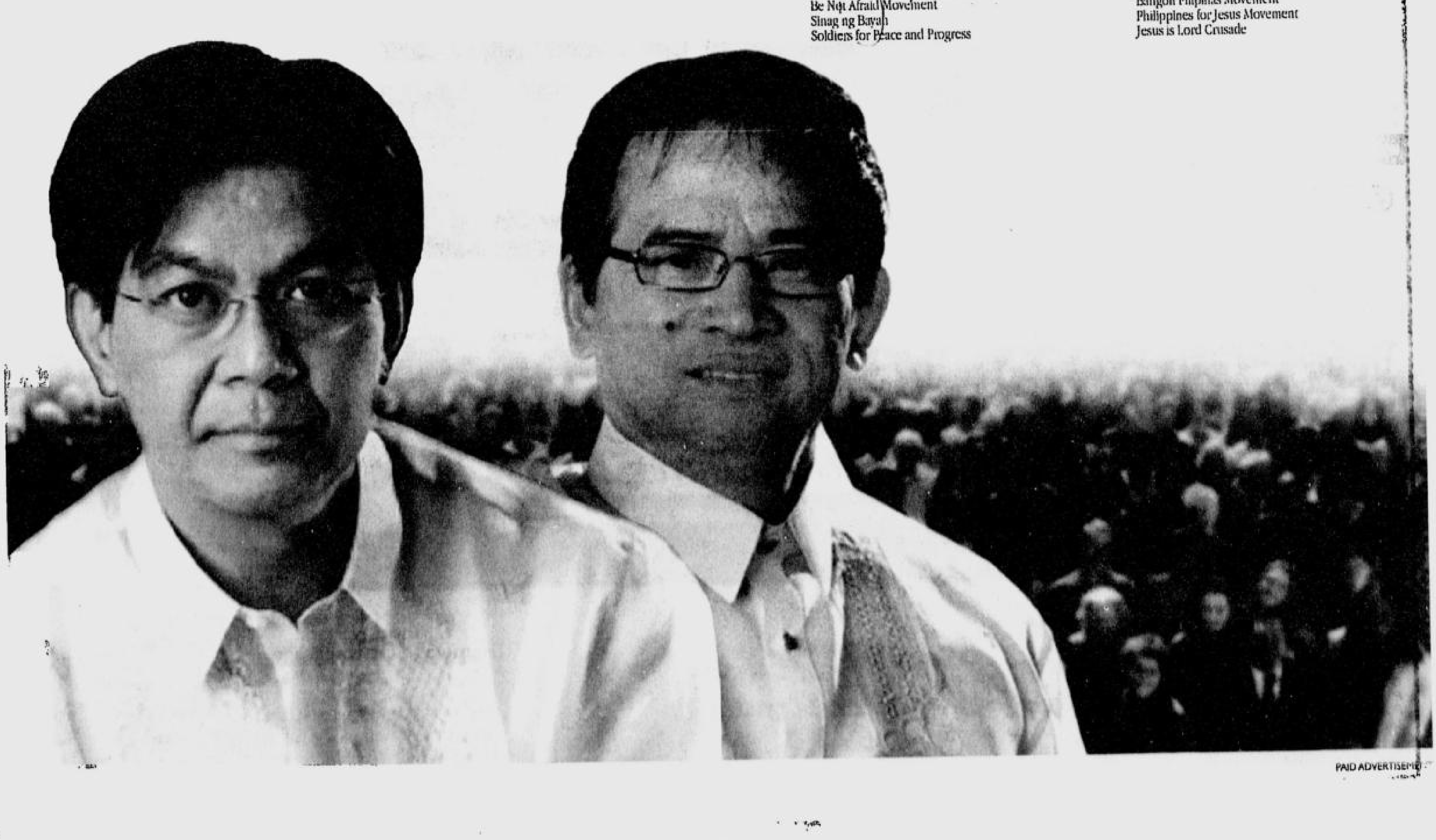

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

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From priests' home to nuns' inn

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Sorsogon City

FOR THOSE TRAVELING to Sorsogon province on a shoestring budget, one safe and neat place to stay is a retirement home called El Retiro in Barangay Cabid-an, 3 km southeast of Sorsogon City proper.

Nestled in the middle of a rice field and a canopy of coconut groves and trees, El Retiro's homey ambiance and neatness bring serenity and comfort after long hours of travel.

Fresh rooms with clean toilets, good for couples and singles, and two cottages for a group or family accommodation are the options provided in the luxury of a quiet retreat.

The place is being run by nuns of the Servants of the Divine Health, who cook for visitors and wait for them even up to the wee hours of the morning.

EL RETIRO offers a quiet, homey place to travelers in Sorsogon. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The home offers favorite Bicol food fare, including vegetables cooked in coconut milk, boiled *pili* peelings in *kuyog* (local fish fry paste aged in salt for at least three months), and fresh fish cooked in lemon, onions, ginger, green pepper and tomatoes.

A statue of the Good Shepherd greets visitors at the entrance of the courtyard. At the back, a pond reflects the image of the Virgin Mary amid the greenery.

Halfway along the access road from the national highway, a hexagon chapel that serves the surrounding community stands like a sentinel.

No retiree

Originally intended as a home for retired priests, El Retiro has been transforming itself into a travelers' inn since it opened in 1991. This is because no retired priests have opted to stay there, preferring to remain in their parishes or be with relatives.

To make use of the facility, the nun who manages the place started accepting clients from the government and nongovernment organizations for overnight conferences or weeklong seminars. Until now, El Retiro's clients are mostly travelers and vacationers referred by friends who know some church people.

Release site

El Retiro was shoved into the limelight when journalists flocked to the place on April 29, 1999 for information about the release of Maj. Roberto Bernal, a government intelligence man captured by the communist New People's Army, to the International Red Cross.

The isolation and thick foliage suited the rebels well for the turnover and their retreat toward the rugged terrain. El Retiro sprawls near thickets at the foot of hillocks.

Bernal was presented before the media in the dining hall of El Retiro.

Accessible

The home is a kilometer away from the national highway going to Matnog port, connected by the access road.

Tricycles from the main road are available until 8 p.m. and charge P20 fare.

From El Retiro, visitors can head west for Donsol town for a seasonal whale shark interaction, or east to the Bulusan mountain lake and the fine white sands of Rizal Beach.

CASEY Calara plays the violin and five other musical instruments. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Girl, 10, plays 6 musical instruments

By Michael B. Jaucian
Naga City

DONNE CASEY LEAÑO Calara surprised her family and their guests when she was able to identify a note struck from a piano key by her aunt. She was 2 years old—and blindfolded.

Since then, Casey has showed her love for music, her mother Glenda said. Although she did not have formal piano lessons, Casey was able to master simple notes.

Seeing her potential, her parents and aunt, Annamaria, decided to give her the lessons. In just one session, Casey learned and played "Birthday Song" perfectly on the piano.

When Annamaria brought Casey to school, her music teacher, Teresita Hidalgo, was surprised and impressed when the little girl played the keyboard and enjoyed doing it.

Hidalgo volunteered to give Casey piano lessons for free because she believed that the child would become a good pianist and violinist.

Aside from being a fast learner, Casey was very talented and diligent, Hidalgo said. Casey could easily memorize and play any type of music.

At 3, Casey, was the youngest student in all the music classes of Hidalgo. She learned how to play the violin at the 4.

Hidalgo also taught Casey how to play the marimba at 5, the organ at 7, and the *kulintang* at 8. Last summer, Melchor Idian of the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music taught her how to play the drums.

Her other tutors in violin were Mark Oliquiano of the UST Conservatory of Music (one semester of 2001), Dr. Jose Bernas (private tutorial in 2002-03), and Jaime Rebustillo (since 2004).

Casey attended two summer workshops at the St. Scholastica's College in Manila on violin under Mary Grace Martinez in 2002 and on piano under Nelia Mitra in 2003.

Classic

Her parents believe that Casey's musical talent was nurtured when she was still in her mother's womb. Glenda said she had heard classical music being played on the piano at the receiving room beside their bedroom by Annamaria.

Annamaria, who was then taking her Bachelor of Arts in Music course at the Universidad de Santa Isabel, was practicing for a recital.

At first, Glenda recalled, she was irritated but she later learned to love and appreciate the classical songs.

Casey's grandmother, Evelyn Marco Calara, said that when Casey was still a baby, she would not sleep if she did not hear music from the radio or television.

Solo concert

Now 10, Casey can express her feelings and convey her ideas when playing six musical instruments—piano, violin, marimba, organ, drums and *kulintang*—before huge crowds.

She impressed the audience during a solo violin concert at the Universidad de Santa Isabel auditorium on Sept. 8, with her rendition of classical pieces by Bach, Gossec, Beethoven, Dvorak, Boccherini and Seitz. She also played local classics, like "Sarong Banggi," "Dandansoy," "Minamahal Kita," "Nasaan Ka Man" and "Dahil Sa Iyo."

Casey's father Esmeraldo said she has always been among the top of her class. She was first honor in Grades 1 and 2, third honor in Grade 3, and second honor in Grade 4.

Casey won first prize in the National Music Competition for Young Artists under the piano category A-1 on Nov. 26, 2004 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

She said she would like to become a well-renowned Filipino composer, like Ryan Cayabyab and Cecile Licad.

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DENR logging ban order stays but sows confusion

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT LIFT THE LOG ban in effect in 15 of 16 regions of the country anytime soon, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources declared yesterday.

"Secretary Defensor has ordered the most extensive log ban in the country so far. We have no plan of lifting it yet," Environment Undersecretary Demetrio Ignacio said during the opening of the three-day National Consultation on Rainforest Reforestation conducted by Haribon.

The DENR, however, has allowed several logging permit holders to harvest timber even in provinces covered by the log ban, causing confusion among furniture makers and drawing flak from environmentalists.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor signed at least six memoranda in August allowing eight holders of Industrial Forest Management Agreements (IFMA) and one holder of a Timber License Agreement (TLA) to cut trees and transport logs.

The memos lifted the suspension of the timber harvesting operations of IFMA holders Sirawal Plywood and Lumber Corp. and Sodaco Agricultural Corp. in Zamboanga; Industries Development Corp. in Aurora; Luzon Mahogany Timber Industries Inc. in Isabela; Star Veneer Manufacturing Corp. in Kalinga Apayao; M&S Company and Silvicultural Industries Inc. in Sultan Kudarat.

The DENR also allowed TLA holder Furniture Group Inc. to harvest timber and transport logs and processed wood in Kalinga. It also allowed IFMA holder Vicmar Development Corp. to transport logs in Lanao del Sur.

Defensor said in his memos that the DENR lifted the logging suspension of the companies after "careful review and validation" by the DENR-NGO (non-government organization) composite team evaluating the IFMAs, TLAs and other tenurial contracts.

"In view hereof and taking into consideration the clamor of the various stakeholders, the suspension of the timber harvesting operations of (company's name) is hereby lifted," Defensor said.

Haribon Foundation, which is pushing for a total commercial log ban, said the DENR's recent orders negated the impact of the log ban supposedly in effect in 15 regions.

"Our forests are important and yet we use it as tools for political patronage, particularly with the current political situation. It's used as rewards for people loyal to the administration," Haribon executive director Anabelle Plantilla said in an interview during the consultation.

Plantilla was apparently alluding to the DENR's decision allowing a firm owned by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile to cut trees inside a protected area in Samar and extending the firm's TLA by another 16 years.

"The log ban has minimal impact. The recent orders negate the impact of the ban," she said.

7 Davao Sur mayors threaten tax revolt over lack of services

SAWA NA KAMI!

DAVAO CITY—FED up with the provincial government's alleged failure to deliver basic services to their constituents, at least seven mayors in Davao del Sur launched what other officials described as a tax revolt.

The League of Municipalities of the Philippines-Davao del Sur chapter led by Bansalan Mayor Peter Melchor Arches, passed a resolution on Nov. 4 which said they would defer the remittance of the provincial government's share of real property taxes and special education fund.

The executives said they would withhold the remittances "until such time that the provincial government can deliver services specifically the repair and maintenance of provincial roads and other provincial infrastructure projects."

The INQUIRER tried to seek the reaction of Gov. Benjamin Bautista but he could not be contacted. His personal assistant would not even take calls.

But Abel Guiñares, Davao del Sur treasurer, said the resolution passed by the mayors could face legal impediments as it contravenes existing laws.

"It should not be the case. Those collections should accrue to the province," Guiñares said.

Guiñares also warned that the resolution would pose "a problem later on" as it would "affect the financial condition of the province."

Guiñares said if the mayors would stand firm on the resolution, the provincial government would bring the matter to the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

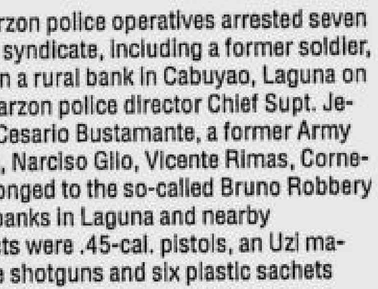
Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas said the mayors have closed ranks in deferring the remittances because it was true that the provincial government has been remiss. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

PDEA exec declared on Awol

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A top official of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Central Mindanao has been declared absent without official leave (Awol) after he was implicated in the murder of a Davao City-based Filipino-Chinese trader. PDEA chief for Central Mindanao Chief Insp. Jessie Estrada said Insp. Victoriano Bato, PDEA assistant regional director for Central Mindanao, has not reported to his office since last month after a court in Davao City issued an arrest warrant against him. Estrada said he gave Bato until Oct. 26 to report for duty and face the murder case. "This prompted me to declare him Awol," Estrada said. Earlier last month, Bato asked permission from Estrada to go on official leave citing the death of his grandchild as reason. Estrada said he has replaced Bato as head of PDEA office in Kidapawan City. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPA followers yield

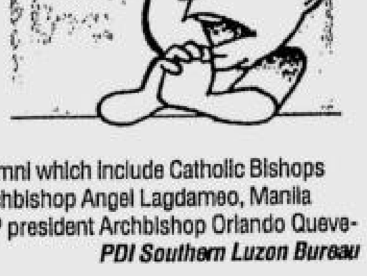

SUKO NA KAMI!

MALAPATAN, Sarangani Province—About 200 members of the Barangay Revolutionary Committee (BRC) of the communist New People's Army (NPA) surrendered to the military on Saturday. Top military, police and government officials went to a remote Barangay Kinam, a two-hour ride from the town center, to welcome the surrenderers back to the fold of the law. The armed members of the NPA militia, locally known as "masa," also surrendered 54 high-powered firearms and 147 assorted improvised guns. Col. Alfredo Cayton, 601st Brigade Commander, said it was part of the military's relentless effort to destroy the mass base of the communist insurgents in the area. Kinam, identified as "red area" by the military is composed of 44 sitios with a total population of 12,000, mostly B'laan natives. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

7 held for rob try

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Calabarzon police operatives arrested seven suspected members of a bank robbery syndicate, including a former soldier, and foiled the group's planned attack on a rural bank in Cabuyao, Laguna on Monday afternoon, according to Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa. The arrested suspects—Cesario Bustamante, a former Army sergeant, Ramil Porquez, Arnel Canete, Narciso Gilo, Vicente Rimas, Cornelio Perez and Christopher Rimas—belonged to the so-called Bruno Robbery Gang believed to be victimizing small banks in Laguna and nearby provinces. Recovered from the suspects were .45-cal. pistols, an Uzi machine pistol, two grenades, homemade shotguns and six plastic sachets containing shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride).
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Priests' reunion today



SAN PABLO CITY—Two INQUIRER correspondents are among some 370 priests, prominent bishops and lay alumni of the Jesuit-run San Jose Major Seminary (SJMS) expected to attend their 76th Alumni Homecoming today and tomorrow at the seminary inside the Ateneo de Manila Campus in Quezon City. Correspondents Fr. Cyrain Cabueñas of the Inquirer's Visayas Bureau, and Fr. Romulo Ponte, of the Southern Luzon Bureau, will join fellow alumni which include Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, past CBCP president Archbishop Orlando Quevedo and Bishop Teodoro Bacani. *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Antilogging groups attack DENR orders

KORONADAL CITY—A CATHOLIC PRIEST who advocates the protection of the environment in South Central Mindanao region has expressed disappointment over the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) move to lift the logging ban.

"The problem with our government is that it does not know how to use our natural resources. The government only looks on the country's economic development aspect. But what's the long-term effect of such decision?" Fr. Romeo Gatedral, director of the Social Action Center in the Diocese here, said.

Catedral said the lifting of the ban will not benefit majority of Filipinos but only businessmen and corrupt officials.

A log ban was imposed last year following flash floods that killed dozens of people and destroyed millions of pesos worth of property in Southern Tagalog and Northern Luzon.

But Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said the decision to lift the ban was based on a thorough study conducted by the environment department and by non-government organizations.

According to Defensor, the ban had affected forest-dependent communities throughout the country comprising holders of some 200 Integrated Forestry Management Agreements (Ifmas), 3,000 Socialized Forestry Management Agreement (SFMAs), and 5,000 Community-Based Forest Management Agreements (CBFMAs).

Of the country's 81 million population, 16 million Filipinos depend on the forest for their livelihood.

Encouraging communities to be involved in forest management, Defensor said the DENR allows only 10 percent of the country's forestlands to be utilized. The lifting of the ban will also allow logging firms to resume operations in the provinces of Central Mindanao.

In 1995, the government adopted the CBFM as a national strategy to ensure a sound development of forest resources by involving communities, not only in the protection, but also in the sustainable utilization of the remaining forests.
Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

EVAT RAID

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Militants from the Cordillera Peoples Alliance picketed the bus stations of Baguio City to expose the effects of an expanded Value Added Tax on commuters. Buses raised their rates immediately when the tax was imposed on Nov. 1.

Ship firm resumes Catanduanes-Tabaco service

TABACO CITY—THE MONTENEGRO Shipping Lines Inc. (MSLI) has resumed operations in the Catanduanes-Tabaco route after stopping two years ago.

"This time, MSLI has bigger ships than the vessels they used before with reasonable fares," said Capt. Tabios Julian Lara, who is also the office-in-charge of the company based in this city's seaport.

With the resumption of MSLI's operation, there are now three shipping companies that serve the route between this city in Albay and Catanduanes province.

The two others are the Regina Shipping Lines and the San Pablo Shipping Lines.

Lara said MSLI's re-establishment of its operation in the province of Catanduanes is part of its support to the Strong Republic Nautical Highway Project of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

MSLI is the first shipping company that has introduced fast craft vessels as an alternative sea transport between Virac, Catanduanes and Tabaco City.

It has two trips daily. The ferry leaves Virac to this port at 8 a.m and 4 p.m. and leaves Tabaco to Virac at 5 a.m. and noon.

Regular fare is P300. Children aged 3-7 years old will pay only P150, while the students, P255. A 20-percent discount awaits senior passengers.

MSLI originally operated as a domestic shipping company in 1978 with the Batangas City-Abra de Ilog (in Mindoro) route. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DENR allows transport of wood products out of Quezon areas

LUCENA CITY—CHARCOAL AND other finished forest products can now be transported out of Quezon province, giving thousands of calamity victims in Real, Infanta and General Nakar towns in northern Quezon an opportunity to have a happy Christmas.

Antonio Diwa, community environment and natural resources officer based in Real, Quezon, said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has again suspended the ban on the movement of forest products out of the province.

The suspension order commenced on Nov. 14 and will take effect for a period of 60 days.

"But unlike in the previous suspension, this time we only allow the movement of charcoal, furniture and other form of finished forest products," Diwa said in a phone interview yesterday.

On Aug. 2, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor allowed the retrieval and movement of logs and wood products in the provinces of Quezon and Aurora for 60 days as part of the government's disaster preparedness program. The permit ended on Oct. 2.

Appealing

However, the Quezon Provincial Multi-sectoral Forest Protection Council had appealing to the DENR for another suspension of the ban, specifically on charcoal and other finished forest products, in the spirit of Christmas.

Thousands of calamity victims have resorted to charcoal making for a living due to the abundance of materials from tops and branches of drifted logs still scattered in the area.

It was learned from a DENR source that the suspension on the gathering of drifted logs and movement of sawn lumber from out of the province is still being carefully studied.

The source explained that should the department allow the retrieval of drifted logs, it will be undertaken by the Natural Resources Development Corp., the marketing arm of the DENR.

Peping Armada, official of Infanta, Real and General Nakar Sash and Furniture Cooperative, stressed that the local wood-based industry should have the priority in all raw materials from the area.

Meanwhile, indigenous Dumagat tribesmen, furniture makers, religious leaders and the QMFPC expressed mixed reactions over a report that the DENR had lifted the log ban in areas covered by existing community-based forest management agreements.

A priest from the Prelature of Infanta, described the reported lifting of the log ban as "shocking."

"Who really benefits from logging? We have long fought for the government to declare a total log ban. Now, who would still believe in the government forest protection program?" said the priest. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Councilor, 4 escorts, killed in Pagadian ambush

PAGADIAN CITY—UNIDENTIFIED gunmen killed at least five people, including a city councilor, and wounded two others during a noontime ambush in Barangay Tiguma here on Tuesday, police authorities said.

Senior Supt. Karib Muammil, Zamboanga del Sur police chief, identified those killed as Councilor Sultan Abdul Marcaban and his bodyguards, TSgt. Edwin Mendez; Pfc. Reggie Pedraverde; Marcaban's nephew Bacer Marcaban and driver Carmelito Bulawin.

Muammil said the ambush took place near an abandoned police detachment in Barangay Tiguma.

Vice Mayor Romeo Pulmones condemned the killing.

Ambush position

Pulmones said Marcaban had just attended the regular session of the city council and was on his way home when ambushed.

Witnesses told police investigators the suspects, on board two vans, positioned themselves along the road.

Muammil said Marcaban was riding his green Isuzu Highlander van while his escorts were in a Multicab police patrol car.

"Two of the gunmen, after pumping hundreds of rounds on the two vehicles, alighted, then finished off the already badly wounded Marcaban," a farmer who was near the crime scene said.

Police said two of Marcaban's wounded security escorts managed to fire back, damaging the back windshield of the white van.

Muammil said the suspects sped off toward Tukuran town. He said policemen recovered an M14 rifle left behind by the suspects.

Spoken language

"According to witnesses, one of those who finished off Marcaban spoke in Maguindanao," Muammil said.

He said the police "have leads" but declined to elaborate.

Muammil said police authorities in Iligan City later arrested a suspect, who was seeking medication from a hospital.

He said the suspect was identified as Welmor Bayana Nacar, 28, a resident of Barangay Polao, Tangub City.

Muammil said the suspect was being interrogated.

Marcaban, who sits at the city council as president of the Association of Barangay Captains, is a staunch anti-drugs advocate.

Last year, the 56-year-old city councilor narrowly escaped an attempt to assassinate him.

Muammil said the police were exploiting all possible angles, including personal grudge and politics, in the investigation of the killing. *Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

RAFFY LERMA

IDLE LAND

A farmer guides his goats through dead sugarcane in Barangay Motrico in La Paz, Tarlac, one of the villages inside Hacienda Luisita which was hit by a labor strike. It's been a year since the strike and some farmers abandoned sugarcane planting and shifted to other forms of livelihood.

Protection of roads from terror attack sought

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—PUBLIC WORKS Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. on Tuesday said government engineers must now help protect public roads, bridges and buildings from terror attacks.

Ebdane, a former national security adviser and former chief of Malacañang's antiterror task force, said new engineering designs for government roads, bridges and buildings must now consider the potential hazards of terror attacks or sabotage.

"That's a new concern. In the design of buildings, you have to consider the security aspect. You have to [design a building that restricts] the entry point for unauthorized personnel... What our designers [should be] doing is to see to it that there are no unnecessary access to vital [infrastructure]," he told reporters here.

He said government engineers must also ensure that damage to a state-owned infrastructure should not be able to spread to other government installations.

Ebdane made the directive at the opening of this year's national conference of the District Engineers' League of the Philippines (DELP).

The new task has become a justification, however, for DELP to plead for a slowdown to a government rationalization plan that threatens to retrench a quarter of the Department of Public Works and Highways' work force.

Mauro Bravo, outgoing DELP president, asked Ebdane to reconsider retrenching workers. He said there should a better way of streamlining employees handling construction and road maintenance work.

He said the Department of Budget and Management has not yet completed its negotiations with employees' unions for an early retirement and retrenchment scheme for all DPWH personnel.

Baguio back in tourism business, says exec

BAGUIO CITY—THE LOCAL tourism industry has "fully recovered" from the meningococcemia scare that hit this mountain resort city late last year as tourists have started returning since September, an official of the Baguio Tourism Council (BTC) said.

"We are back in business," said Nicolas Tabora, BTC chair, during the launching of the 5th Baguio Tossed Salad Festival on Wednesday.

Reports on victims of meningococcemia, a fatal meningitis strain, appeared in newspaper and TV reports and caused panic among residents and tourists who feared that they would contract the disease.

Tabora said because of the local tourism industry crisis brought about by the meningococcemia scare, the BTC was forced to spend for a promotions blitz in the print and broadcast media to project that Baguio was a safe destination.

He said members and officials of the Baguio Association of Hotels and Inns (Bahai) reported a 60 to 100 percent hotel booking during the long weekend in the last week of October and first week of November as tourists returned to Baguio.

Jeanine Chan, Bahai president and manager of Mountain Lodge, said they have been receiving reservations for December unlike last year when bookings dropped and when several visitors cancelled reservations due to the meningococcemia scare.

"At least we have guests in our hotels who say they are not scared of going around the city," said Might Gupit, owner of the Baden Powell Inn.

Purificacion Molintas, regional director of the Department of Tourism, said various conferences were also held in the city in the last three months.

She said the city has 250 hotels, excluding facilities for transients, condominium units and apartments. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

GMA allows construction of Baguio City flyover

BAGUIO CITY—MALACAÑANG has allowed the Department of Public Works and Highways to proceed with a flyover project that President Macapagal-Arroyo suspended on March 12 because of complaints from residents, according to a top DPWH official in the Cordillera.

Mario Alquiza, DPWH Cordillera director, said he received "high-level instructions" last week to proceed with the project.

"I already issued the order to start the construction, after the contractor [refused to drop the project]," he said.

Ms Arroyo earlier asked Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. to negotiate a way out of a contract for the construction of the P88-million flyover, which would use P44 million in savings from a Japanese loan that financed the modernization of the Marcos Highway.

Officials from Baguio and Benguet questioned the necessity of a flyover project, so Ms Arroyo decided to realign the savings instead to road and transportation projects for Kapangan, Benguet, and Tinglayan, Kalinga.

Alquiza said Ebdane had earmarked funds for a Kapangan farm-to-market road and a cable car system for Tinglayan from other DPWH allocations in future budgets.

Alquiza said he could not obtain permits from the Baguio city government that would allow DPWH contractors to cut down 19 trees that are in the way of the flyover project.

Mayor Braulio Yaranon, who had criticized the project, said he would continue challenging it at the Ombudsman because of questions arising from its funding.

The project was originally introduced as a P140-million underpass, using savings from the Marcos Highway rehabilitation.

It was reintroduced as a flyover plan when environmental issues forced the DPWH to drop its underpass proposal.

But the DPWH was again criticized for passing off the wrong project. The agency obtained an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for a 178-meter long flyover when it was actually raising a 296-meter long flyover that traverses Marcos Highway and Kennon Road. Both highways are the fastest routes to Baguio from Metro Manila.

Alquiza said DPWH has corrected the ECC problems. He said the ECC alone should be justification for the cutting of trees there.

The project will be built in three phases because it will rely on three funding tranches.

The first phase will be funded from the P44 million Marcos Highway savings. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Palawan tribes commune with each other in rare show

Celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Month turns festive

By Jofelle P. Tesorio
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THEY CLIMBED TREES WITHOUT a harness, beat the drums with passion and danced till midnight.

It was a day of fun and camaraderie among the Pala'wan, Tagbanua and Batak tribes, as they celebrated the Indigenous Peoples' Month last Oct. 17 at the Kamarikutan Kape at Galeri.

But most of all, it was a sharing of tradition, culture, skills and style, said city tourism officer Bimbo Fernandez, who was beaming with pride as if the participants were his children.

Fernandez's Kapatagan, a suboffice of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), and Kamarikutan, a cafe and gallery of indigenous arts, brought together the Bataks of Kalakuasan, Tagnaya and Tinitian, the Tagbanua of Irawan, Puerto Princesa City, and the Pala'wan of Sofronio Española for the celebration—a rare occasion because the ones who always meet are the tribal leaders.

"When the Tagbanua beat their drums, the Batak were amazed," Fernandez said.

It was not a competition but the participants displayed their best skills and talents. No one beat the other, but they all ended up winning each other's smile and friendship.

Dances

In the evening, they performed their dances and music with much fervor—a fitting contribution to the fourth anniversary of Pabilugon, a monthly moon watching ritual of songs, dances and prayers that Fernandez started.

Elderly and young Batak women took turns playing bamboo musical instruments, while their men performed traditional warrior dances.

The Batak women, sitting in one line on the other side of the open stage, beat the bamboo log (used as a percussion instrument) with a pair of sticks, in a wild yet rythmic motion. Among the groups, the Bataks were more aggressive compared to the other more reserved natives. Their men, brandishing weapons, showed the warrior dance as a simulation of duels.

Not to be outdone, the Pala'wan played the gongs and drums while the women performed the traditional rituals of Tarek and Kendar through dance. The movements are concentrated on the feet while the arms shake.

A Tagbanua elderly woman performed the Uyman, a spontaneous chant narrating the event and how she was happy to meet friends from other groups. Their group also performed the Pagdiwata.

Special performance

Masino Intaray, a Gawad ng Manlilikha ng Bayan awardee, which is the indigenous equivalent of a national artist, held a special performance of the "Basal" with his brother Tagong, Jose Apol, Jose Rilla, his nephews, nieces and grandchildren. *Basal* is a narration of epics interspersed with gong playing.

A national living treasure, Intaray garnered the award for his lyrical chanting of the *Basal* which lasts up to three nights in a row. His epic "Kudaman" has been published in a book and transcribed from Pala'wan to French and Filipino.

As Nanay Dayang Macasaet and Dinggot Prieto Macasaet, owners of Kamarikutan and advocates of indigenous peoples' rights, put it, the day was a convergence of cultures and traditions.

MANSINO Intaray, a Gawad Manlilikha awardee, starts his chant that would last for three days. JOFELLE TESORIO/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

DOJ chief accused of coddling 6 Marines

From page A1

have these soldiers go to jail. He let them go," Legarda said.

Transfer of case rejected

Yesterday, Gonzalez rejected Legarda's request to transfer the preliminary investigation of the case, scheduled for Nov. 23, from Olongapo City to Manila.

While admitting that he has yet to read her letter-request, Gonzalez described as "illogical" Legarda's fear that her client's case might end up like the other sexual abuse and rape cases that had been dismissed by the Olongapo City Prosecutor's Office.

"The circumstances are different there," Gonzalez said. He added that if the prosecutors showed any bias or other anomalous actions, then he would have the case transferred to the DOJ in Manila.

"Let's have the preliminary investigation first. If there's a good reason (to transfer the case), then we'll do it but let's allow the fiscal to do his job," he said.

'Good luck sign'

Gonzalez again reminded the suspects that nonappearance during the preliminary investigation and not submitting their counteraffidavits would mean that the charge against them before the prosecutors would go unchallenged.

"Strictly speaking, they can waive it but you cannot file your counteraffidavit without swearing before the fiscal," he said.

While rejecting Legarda's request for a transfer, Gonzalez said he was willing to grant her wish that Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño be appointed as special prosecutor if a case against the US Marines was later filed in court.

Legarda has said that she wants Zuño as a "good luck" sign since he was the prosecutor who helped her convict former Zamboanga Rep. Romeo Jalosjos for raping an 11-year-old girl in 1996.

"They can have it if they want it," Gonzalez said.

In Olongapo City, Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni said it was "not true" that as many as 3,000 rape cases against Americans had been dismissed when the freeport was still a US naval base.

He said fewer than 30 cases had been filed against US sailors and most had been dismissed for lack of evidence. Others were settled out of court, he said.

To review VFA

US Embassy custody of the alleged rapists is now the subject of a debate and one of the reasons why the Legislative Oversight Committee on the Visiting Forces Agreement will convene this morning to review the VFA.

The committee, cochaired by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, also invited Timoteo Soriano, the driver of the rented van where the Americans allegedly raped the college graduate from Zamboanga.

"We invited the driver as well because from his testimony—apparently he is the only witness available—we will have an idea how long the trial will take," Santiago said.

She noted that Legarda had expressed concern the one-year deadline for the resolution of the case stipulated in the VFA was practically impossible to meet.

"Then we'll know if there is a valid ground for the transfer to Okinawa," the senator said.

The senator herself opposed the reported request of the US Marines to be transferred to Japan while the case was pending. She said this would further inflame Filipino passions.

Santiago said that if the testimony of the driver was straightforward and credible there should be no transfer of the accused. However, the driver has not confirmed attendance at the hearing.

She said it was time the committee reviewed the VFA because of conflicting statements by Philippine officials on the custody issue.

Deliberately vague on custody

"In my view as a lawyer, the VFA is deliberately vague on custody before judgment," Santiago said. But she has warned that the Philippines can terminate the VFA if the US Marines were transferred to the US base in Japan.

She said she would ask VFA Commission Executive Director Zosimo Paredes to explain his controversial statement that nothing in the VFA required the detention of the US Marines in the country.

Santiago has said that the United States could only have custody of US personnel facing criminal charges if the Philippine government approves a formal request on this.

She says she wants to know whether the United States has made a request for custody of the Americans and if so why the Philippine government granted it.

Invited to appear in the hearing were Justice Secretary Gonzalez, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Zuño, Legarda, University of the Philippines College of Law dean Salvador Carlota and noted constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas.

Also yesterday, 50 members of militant groups Akbayan and the Alliance of Progressive Labor-Women staged a lightning rally near the US Embassy in a continuing protest against the Subic incident. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Tina G. Santos*

GMA House allies scramble to cover up . . .

From page A1

existed to topple Ms Arroyo by embarrassing her with the Garci tapes but that the administration "contributed nothing toward arriving at the truth."

"Malacañang was clearly at an utter loss to explain the tapes and, on two occasions, tried to cover up," said the draft report that was sent to around 30 members of the five committees for yesterday's discussions.

Validates fabricated story

Disclosures of the wiretap in June sparked the worst crisis in the 4-year-old Arroyo presidency and demands for her resignation. Ms Arroyo has apologized for talking with an election official but has denied wrongdoing. In September, she escaped an impeachment attempt in the House over fraud allegations during the vote.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said yesterday the committee report was nothing more than a "validation of a fabricated story" since its findings were based on "an anomalous recording."

"The only way they can come up with a story that's acceptable and authoritative is by having the records authenticated," said Defensor, also an Arroyo spokesperson.

In August, Defensor presented a forensic sound expert's findings that the "Hello Garci" records were "full of anomalies." During his press conference at that time, Defensor said the wiretaps showed that "it was the President's voice but she's not the one talking."

BACK TO "HELLO GARCI," the report: House committee chair on public information, Rep. Gilbert Remulla of Cavite, flips through the 64-page draft report on the results of the hearings of five committees on the tapped conversations of President Arroyo and "Garci." At left is Rep. Roquito Ablan of Ilocos Norte and at right is Rep. Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur. JOAN BONDOC

Reacting to an item in the committee report that said the administration did not cooperate in shedding light on the controversy, Defensor said, "How can we cooperate on something that is a hoax?"

Move against Remulla

Defensor didn't mention the need to produce Garcillano himself who is believed to have fled the country with the assistance of influential people in government.

Rep. Gilbert Remulla, a Nacionalista Party member from Cavite, said discussions were "to be continued next Tuesday" because "of the many amendments suggested by members."

Remulla, who chaired the lead committee in the inquiry, described the discussions as "spirited."

The furor over the report was manifested on the floor of the House late Tuesday when Rep. Del de Guzman of Marikina, acting as majority leader, moved to replace Remulla as chair of the House committee on public information.

Had it not been for party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva of Cibac, an opposition lawmaker who promptly questioned the quorum, Remulla could have been ousted then and there.

"That's to be expected," said Remulla, stressing that it was "clearly" an act of retribution from the majority bloc.

However, he said that the joint committee had agreed early on to allow him to continue chairing the lead committee until the report was adopted by the plenary.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero told the INQUIRER that the minority was preparing to submit its own comments.

"We will study the report first," said Escudero who, however, pointed to the failure of the report to recommend criminal charges against Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye for his "incredible claim" that he possessed an original and a tampered audio compact disc.

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said that the draft report "had no teeth" because it glossed over the possible culpability of Ms Arroyo when she talked with Garcillano at the height of the canvassing of votes last year.

The 64-page draft report exclusively obtained by the INQUIRER from a congressional staff member said that a conspiracy clearly

the report was "too opposition" oriented while the minority bloc in the chamber complained that it was "too soft" on Ms Arroyo.

All Palace wants for Christmas is forget 'Hello Garci' story

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG'S WISH, EVEN if only for the Christmas holidays, is to forget about "Hello Garci" for a while.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday finding President Macapagal-Arroyo's controversial phone pal is not a priority.

There are many things on Malacañang's plate and looking for former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano is not one of them, said Ermita. *(See Page A1 story.)*

Ermita conceded that Garcillano's case would make a good read, ala Mickey Spillane thriller, because it involved a conspiracy, a cover-up and a missing person.

"Maybe later somebody can put this in writing and it will be good reading." But right now, Malacañang has had too much of the Hello Garci case. "If it was a steak, it'd be overdone by now."

Ermita said the only reason why Malacañang wanted the Hello Garci case declared a closed book was to "to divert our attention or discussions from controversies. "But if you think it is still an open book, so be it. If you think it should be a closed book why not? The future will tell the real fate of Mr. Garcillano," Ermita said.

"How we wish people will be responsible enough to set it aside probably for the moment in preparation for Christmas. Let's be more positive so our citizens will have less worries," Ermita said.

Ping, Bro. Eddie issue joint statement for GMA to resign

SEN. PANFILO LACSON AND evangelist Eduardo Villanueva who both ran in last year's presidential race reiterated calls on Ms Arroyo's removal from office—voluntary or forced.

It is the first time that the two political rivals come together to issue a statement.

The two issued a joint statement reacting to Defensor's claim on Monday that the wiretap scandal was over.

Lacson and Villanueva said attempts had been made to make the wrong things right with the impeachment of President Arroyo but "the pretender and her accomplices have aborted the same, and continue to lie and dissemble before the nation and the world.

"Now they call on all of us to 'move on,' to forget the wrongs, to falsely hope that material progress can come under a regime founded on a lie and bereft of right. In short, they want this nation under God to live a lie," they said.

"If hope in our collective future as a nation and as a people are to be resurrected, we must require the sacrifice, willing or forced, of those who have committed the most atrocious of public sins, which is the stealing of the people's sovereign will," they added. *Norman Bordadora*

Teary Dinky says sorry to the public

From page A1

privy to actions that betrayed public trust as a public servant," Soliman told the Citizens' Congress for Truth and Accountability (CCTA).

The fact-finding body has been hearing testimony about allegations that Ms Arroyo committed electoral fraud, used government money to fund her campaign and did not respect human rights.

Soliman also urged the middle class to begin taking responsibility for allowing immoral things like cheating to happen.

"If we cannot collectively confront this situation that we have brought upon ourselves, I think we are selling the future of our country to an immoral and no-integrity kind of leadership. And that, I think, is going to be a disaster. So I come here today to tell my truth, to do my accounting to the public and to continue to ask Mrs. Macapagal-Arroyo to do the same," she said at the CCTA hearing at the University of Makati.

Soliman is part of the so-called Hyatt 10, which is made up of Cabinet secretaries and agency heads who resigned on July 8 and asked Ms Arroyo to do the same.

Unwitting cooperation

Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, head of the CCTA 15-member presidium, praised Soliman for speaking out about her "unwitting cooperation" in the "grand design" to make Ms Arroyo win the 2004 elections.

In its fourth hearing yesterday, the CCTA delved into allegations that Ms Arroyo cheated and used public funds for her campaign.

Soliman said she had attended Cabinet meetings from January to March last year when Ms Arroyo's campaign strategy against Poe was planned.

The strategy adopted was to "increase government assistance" by distributing PhilHealth cards in areas where Poe, an immensely popular movie actor, was strong, she said.

Health insurance cards

Soliman said she personally distributed 3,000 PhilHealth cards in Pangasinan, Poe's home province.

She said the Cabinet also agreed to distribute 5 million cards with "universal coverage" for one year at P1,600 per card. However, she said she was not aware how the PhilHealth cards were funded.

Maita Santiago, secretary general of Migrante, said migrant workers' contributions were diverted to fund projects designed to boost Ms Arroyo's popularity.

In a digital presentation, Santiago said the government earned P1,237,004,100 from the Welfare Fund Contribution and P830,229,200 from the Medicare Fund contributions of overseas Filipino workers in 2003.

The money was diverted for purposes such as the alleged "massive evacuation" of OFWs from Iraq and the "Classroom Galing sa Mamamayang Pilipino sa Abroad, or CGMA," she said.

Citing documents, Santiago also said that P530,382,446 was diverted from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration's Medicare Fund to the PhilHealth Fund on Feb. 2, 2004.

Duque denial

Health Secretary Francisco Duque denied that health cards were distributed by the administration to the poor to help the election campaign of Ms Arroyo.

"Its unfortunate that's the perception," Duque told reporters at a news conference in Malacañang.

Being the former PhilHealth president before his appointment as health secretary, Duque acknowledged that PhilHealth cards were distributed to poor communities all over the country because this was the mandate of his office.

When the Arroyo administration took over in 2001, Duque said there were only 2.5 million beneficiaries of the health cards. But by the end of 2003, the number increased to eight million.

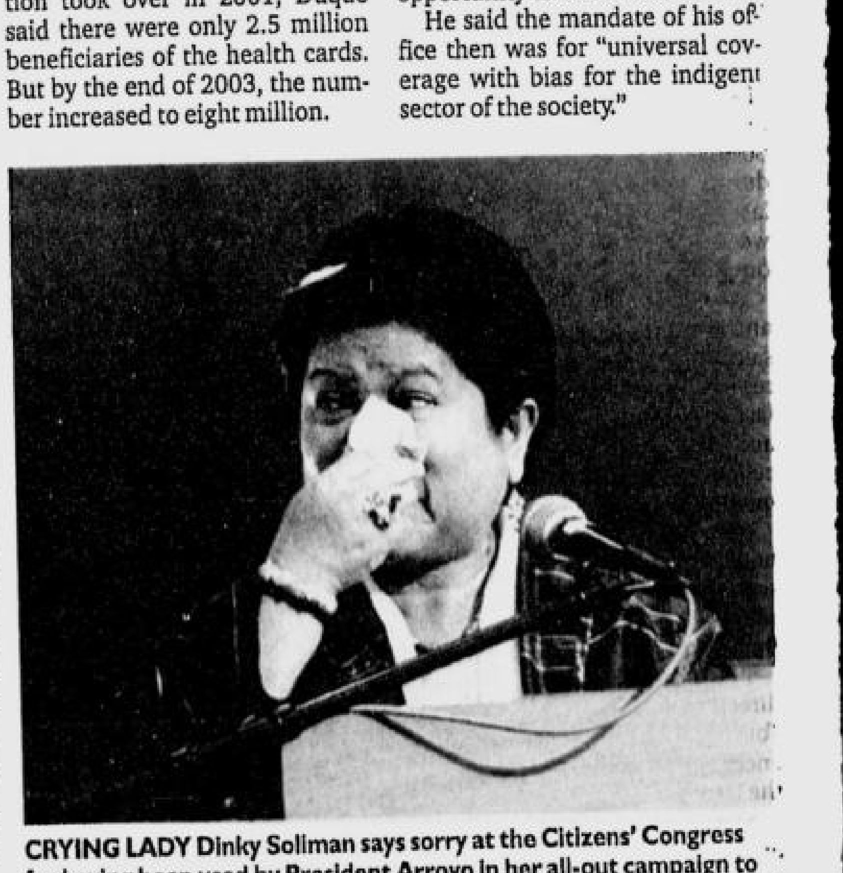
"We thought an effective social security program to be provided to the indigent should be the first order of the day," he said, noting that the poor could not expect from the Government Service Insurance System or Social Security System for health insurance coverage.

Duque said it would be negligent of his office not to issue PhilHealth cards during the election campaign because the funds and opportunity to do so were there."

He said the mandate of his office then was for "universal coverage with bias for the indigent sector of the society."

MABUHAY
GUARDIANS

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE, members of the Guardians denounce the "people's court" held at the Makati University on Wednesday, its fourth day of hearing the truth about the alleged crimes of President Arroyo. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO



CRYING LADY Dinky Soliman says sorry at the Citizens' Congress for having been used by President Arroyo in her all-out campaign to win the presidential election last year. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

1.2M Meralco customers to pay P108 more due to VAT

From page A1

bano Jr. said yesterday that Napocor was seeking to recover 45 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in the Luzon grid spread over a year, 64 centavos per kWh in the Visayas grid spread over six months and 51 centavos per kWh for the Mindanao grid spread over 18 months.

These amounts included some deferred costs that Napocor had not been able to collect from its customers, apart from the fuel price and currency exchange fluctuations.

P19 billion

Albano said the state firm, in its recovery applications, wanted to recover some P19 billion from its customers, representing cost fluctuations related to purchased power and foreign exchange.

"It's possible that these claims may be too high, which is why we're asking them to submit more evidence of these claims," he said.

Meralco and other retailer of electricity buy power from Napocor.

The ERC has finally issued the guidelines for the VAT's implementation by power firms, paving the way for the collection of the tax from consumers.

ERC Resolution No. 20 says the imposition of VAT will be based on the gross receipts of generation firms, National Transmission Corp. (Transco) and distribution utilities such as Meralco.

As Meralco has a billing cycle that does not start on the first day of the month, VAT will be calculated "on a pro-rata basis applied on the distribution component for consumption beginning Nov. 1, 2005," the ERC resolution said.

ALBANO: To ascertain veracity of Napocor claims

The generation and transmission components will be billed upon receipt of the bills from the generation firms and from Transco, the ERC said.

Lifeline consumers

For end-users, particularly households, they will shoulder only between 6 percent and 7 percent instead of the full 10-percent VAT, according to Albano.

Lifeline consumers, or those using 100 kWh or less a month, will still be entitled to discounts: 50 percent for those consuming less than 50 kWh, 35 percent for those using 51-70 kWh and 20 percent for those consuming 71-100 kWh.

Taking the lifeline discounts into consideration, plus some mitigating measures and non-VATable components of the electricity bill, households consuming 50 kWh a month will see their bills rise by P11.48 to P200.94 from the current P189.46.

Those using 100 kWh will have to shell out an additional P41.13 a month as their bills will increase from P610.63 to P651.76.

Albano said the impact of VAT on power rates was mitigated by various measures, including the removal of the 2-percent national franchise tax as well as the existence of non-VATable components in the electricity bill.

The non-VATable components include the benefit to host communities under Energy Regulation 1-94, universal charges under Republic Act No. 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, and the energy tax under Batas Pambansa 36.

The impact of VAT also depends on which grid a consumer is a part of as the type of fuel used in power generation will affect the final rate.

Rates in Visayas, Mindanao

In the Visayas and Mindanao, the VAT impact is likely to be relatively smaller than in Luzon because the two grids rely mostly on renewable energy sources.

Under Republic Act No. 9337 or the Expanded Value-Added Tax Law, renewable energy sources such as geothermal and hydro are exempted from the 10-percent VAT.

All other fuel types, including coal, are subject to the new tax.

To enable consumers to better see the impact of VAT on their bills, power firms will show VAT charges as a separate item in their individual billing statements to customers in a format that the regulatory body will approve, the resolution states.

Even with the imposition of VAT on power, locators in Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) areas and in the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority are subject to a zero VAT rate.

Additional evidence needed

Albano said it was taking the ERC quite some time to rule on Napocor's applications for higher rates as the regulatory body wanted to be sure of the veracity of Napocor's claims.

"But we're ruling on it. We can't decide on this yet since we're still waiting for additional evidence and we don't have quorum at the moment. But it's due for discussion in the next commission meeting. We'll definitely have a decision before the end of the year," he said.

Napocor, together with Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp., in September filed applications for the generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) and the incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera).

The quarterly GRAM allows Napocor to recover cost fluctuations related to its purchased power from independent power producers. The Icera is a quarterly rate adjustment mechanism that allows Napocor to reflect foreign exchange fluctuations in the rates it charges its customers.

Incremental costs

Both filings, the fifth for the GRAM and the fourth for the Icera, cover incremental costs incurred from October last year to March this year.

The fifth GRAM filing includes the amounts to be recovered from the Luzon and Mindanao grids, as well as the amount to be refunded to the Visayas grid.

These recoveries and refund stemmed from the ERC's final decision on the Napocor-Psalm joint application for time-of-use (TOU) rates.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar earlier said that selling rates of the state-run power firm would likely increase by an average of only 18.99 centavos per kWh nationwide if the ERC approved its GRAM and Icera applications.

Erap: Ateneo taught me not to cheat, lie or steal

From page A1

golden jubilee reunion: "I did not have to lie to our people to gain power and retain it because the Ateneo taught me that lying is wrong."

Estrada may have been impeached, but "once an Atenean, always an Atenean," he said in the message to his Ateneo Class of 1955 reunion on Tuesday night.

In fact, Estrada, who is detained while on trial for plunder, said he had upheld the values not to lie, cheat or steal "because the Ateneo taught me" these were wrong.

Also did not cheat to win

Estrada's message was read by his Senator-son, Jinggoy, midway in the four-hour concert that highlighted the class' golden jubilee program at the Meralco Theater in Pasig.

"I did not have to cheat to win the election because the Ateneo taught me that cheating is wrong," Estrada said in his message, drawing a loud applause from the audience.

"I did not also have to lie to our people to gain power or retain it, because the Ateneo taught me that lying is wrong," Estrada also said.

"I did not also steal from public funds to win the election, because the Ateneo taught me that stealing is wrong," Estrada also said.

Estrada was kicked out of Ateneo high school in his sophomore year after he hit an American student who, he said, was bullying a smaller Filipino classmate.

Palace as port area

Taking a dig at the credibility problems of his successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo, Estrada joked about the presence of container vans to block anti-Arroyo activists from getting near Malacañang.

"I heard that Malacañang is now a port area because there are so many container vans," Estrada joked in his speech, eliciting giggles from the audience.

Peacock named Garci

He also announced he had just acquired a peacock to add to his Tanay "constituencies" of ducks and chickens.

"I named my peacock Garci, and every morning, I greet him, Hello Garci," Estrada said.

"My peacock also talks to me. He told me he wants to go abroad," Estrada continued, drawing more laughter from his audience, mostly families of Ateneo graduates.

Sandigan denies appeal

In an appeal to the Sandiganbayan, five of Estrada's former classmates tried to invite him to the reunion. But the antigraft court thumbed down the request, saying it was costly and risky to allow the former President to motor to the venue from his vacation house in Tanay for the reunion.

Estrada, a former movie star known for his flamboyant lifestyle, would have loved to be there.

Still starring

In fact, even in his absence, he was clearly the star of his class in a night of music and nostalgia.

Directed by Angie Magbanua, the four-hour concert featured top hits from the '50s and '60s as interpreted by Estrada's high school classmates, among them Tony Lopa, Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino and public relations executive Reli German.

ESTRADA: A peacock named Garci

With thick sideburns and an all-white signature Elvis Presley costume, Aquino drew catcalls with his rendition of Presley's "Teddy Bear."

On wings of songs

German, who is Ms Arroyo's current PR consultant and Estrada's ex-PR man, drew applause in his duet "You Don't Bring Me Flowers Anymore" with Jaya.

The concert was organized by the Eagle High School '55 Foundation Inc.

Titled "On Wings of Song, One Big Flight," it also featured aside from Jaya, Asia's Queen of Songs Pilita Corrales, pop divas Verni Varga and Julia Abueva and the Jesuit Music Ministry.

Who's who

The class roster includes former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, former Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon Jr., former Press Secretary Horacio "Ducky" Paredes, former Energy Secretary Mario Tiaoqui, former Customs Commissioner Renato Ampil, former Monetary Board member Antonino Alindogan, former Labor Undersecretary Felicisimo Joson, former Ambassador to Beijing Romualdo Ong, former Ambassador to The Hague Eloy Bello III, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) director Mike Barretto, novelist Roger Olivarez, lawyers Fernando Chua, Renato Francisco and Domingo Ordoveza, retired Air Force Gen. Rogelio Asuncion, Dr. Arturo Ludan, Msgr. Augusto Pedrosa and architect Tony Evangelista.

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11-17

NBI nabs 2 suspected forgers for selling fake arrest warrants

By Tina G. Santos

EVEN WARRANTS OF ARREST AND DEtention release orders can now be forged.

Forgers in Manila have apparently graduated from manufacturing fake diplomas to these more menacing and more financially-rewarding forms of forgery.

Agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) found this out when they arrested two men suspected of supplying fake documents to criminal syndicates during a raid in Quiapo the other day.

The NBI identified the suspected forgers as Nashrudin Uda, 46, of San Miguel, and Romeo Alinsugay, 27, of Sampaloc, both in Manila. They are now detained at the NBI headquarters.

The suspects face charges of falsification of public and commercial documents.

Seized during a raid on the business stalls of the suspects on R. Hidalgo Street and Quezon Boulevard, both in Quiapo were several counterfeit documents, including warrants of arrest and release orders from detention.

The NBI operatives also discovered several fake diplomas supposedly from Manila's reputable schools, fabricated school transcripts, forged land titles and NBI clearances, fake driver's licenses and forgery paraphernalia like computer units, xerox and laminating machines.

Authorities have expressed alarm over the forgery of the said documents because these could easily be used in criminal activities.

NBI Regional Director Ruel Lasala, who led the raid, said the fake warrants of arrest might have been used by criminal syndicates to extort money from people with pending cases in court.

The raid was conducted after an informant of the NBI managed to purchase documents including NBI clearances, transcripts of records and diplomas from the suspects.

A certification issued by the NBI Electronic Data Processing Division and the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) showed that the documents were fake.

Apart from Uda and Alinsugay, the NBI also arrested a certain Emma Obar, 36, who was later ordered released by the court for further investigation, Lasala said.

Investigation showed that the suspects were selling fake diplomas, other school records and certificates for P1,500 while NBI clearances, warrants of arrest and release orders from detention allegedly fetch as much as P2,000 to P3,000 each.

The application fee for a legitimate NBI clearance costs P115. Only courts, on the other hand, are allowed to issue warrants of arrest and release orders. Following the discovery of the forged documents, the NBI said they would continue its crackdown on similar forgery rings in the city.

Food spoils party revelry; 22 down

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

REVELRY ENDED IN PANIC AFTER VILlagers who attended a birthday party in Antipolo City the other night fell ill because of what police suspect could be a case of food poisoning.

The victims, mostly children, complained of stomach pains followed by nausea and vomiting hours after attending the party of a year-old neighbor in Barangay Dela Paz on Tuesday night.

Initial reports from the Antipolo City Health Office said about 30 residents fell ill, but only 22 sought treatment at the Antipolo City District Hospital.

"They suffered from food poisoning. But we have not yet determined what specific organism caused it," resident physician Reynaldo Buenviaje said.

Stable and safe

The doctor said the victims' conditions had stabilized and were allowed to go home yesterday morning.

Two of the victims were aged 2. The oldest victim was aged 54.

Rizal Provincial Police director Chief Supt. Freddie Panen said the victims blamed the spaghetti they had eaten at the party as the cause of stomach pains experienced by the guests.

Police investigation showed that the victims attended a birthday in Sitio Broadway about 4 p.m. Tuesday where they were served a variety of dishes: Bicol Express, pansit palabok and spaghetti.

Party pooper

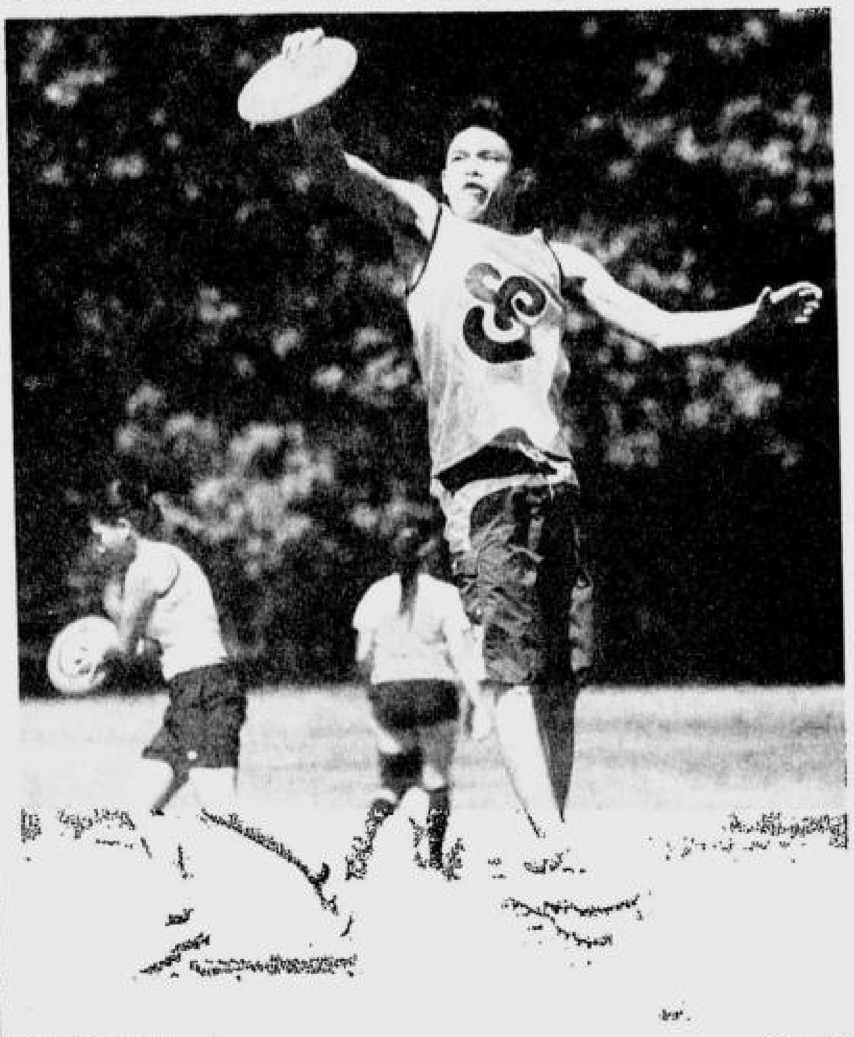
The party ended at about 6 p.m. but before going home, some of the visitors were given spaghetti in packed trays, city police investigation desk officer PO2 Orlando Jalmasco said.

Hours later, some residents started feeling stomach pains and began throwing up.

Most of the victims were rushed to the hospital. But some decided to just stay home.

Buenviaje said food poisoning was usually caused by improper food preparation.

Storing newly cooked food in sealed containers or casseroles also produces moisture, making the stored food susceptible to bacteria, he added.



NEW HIGH LYN RILLON

Sports enthusiasts play a game of Ultimate Frisbee at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus.

Women accuse NPD SWAT team of harassment

By Nancy Carvajal

AT LEAST 15 MEMBERS OF THE NORTHern Police District Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) were accused yesterday of harassment and abuse of authority by five elderly women.

In their complaint, Consuelo Balete, 65, single; Eugenia Diangzon, 67; Milagros Guerrero, 52, widower; Nida Guerrero, 53; and Elsie Balete, 57, said the SWAT team entered their compound located at 111 Malaya St., Caloocan City, at around 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday and pointed their guns at them.

"They swooped down on us like we were criminals and pointed their weapons at us, including my sick 68-year-old sister," Balete said in a telephone interview.

Balete said the cops also fired warning shots twice without any provocation.

"We found the slugs and we will show these," she said, adding that the SWAT team violated their rights.

Balete said the incident left them traumatized that they now find it hard to sleep at night.

"Until now we can't sleep because of fear that they will come back and shoot us," she said.

According to Balete, one of the policemen later informed her sister after the "indiscriminate firing" that they were there because of a supposed shooting incident in the area two hours earlier.

"But there was no shooting and if it took place at 6:30 why would they come two hours later?" the complainants said.

The INQUIRER failed to get any comment from any member of the SWAT team.

But Senior Supt. Virgilio Espija Deputy District Director for Administration promised to look into the case.

"We will investigate the case and identify the members involved," Espija said.

Arroceros caretaker's house torn down 'on short notice'

WINNER Foundation officers view ongoing construction of the controversial DepEd building inside the park. RYAN LIM

By Tina G. Santos

TEMPERS ROSE ANEW AT THE contested Arroceros Forest Park in Manila yesterday as City Hall workers demolished the house of Jenlyn Rosamiran, the park's caretaker for five years now.

Rosamiran, 34, who was commissioned by Winner Foundation, environment advocates, to take care of the greenery, said the demolition team arrived at around 1 p.m. and immediately started dismantling her house without showing her any eviction notice or court order.

"They said there was no longer a need for an eviction notice or court order because Arroceros Park is government property," she told INQUIRER.

Rosamiran said she was only informed of the planned demolition at 11:30 a.m. yesterday by a park security guard who asked her to pack her things because a demolition team was coming.

One of the workers, she added, told her they were just merely "following orders from higher-ups." Rosamiran's shanty, which she shared with her husband and one of their two children, was located several meters away from the two-story teachers' building now being built inside the 2.1-hectare property.

Winner Foundation had been opposing the construction of the building inside the park—which had also been declared an archaeological site—saying the move would result in the destruction of trees and lush foliage inside what it called Manila's "last lung."

"The building would not occupy the area where my house used to stand. I know they just wanted me out because they said I am not a city government employee," Rosamiran added.

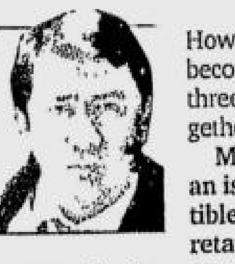
Rosamiran said the barracks of some Metro Manila Development Authority flood control personnel located outside the property was also not spared from the demolition. Winner condemned the demolition saying it was a violation of the caretaker's human rights.

"Even informal settlers have their rights. They are served eviction notices and are not driven away unless they have a relocation site. Now Jen and her family have nowhere to go," Regina Paterno, Winner president, said. The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Mayor Lito Atienza or city legal officer Melchor Monsod for comment.

Let's put an end to the Babao controversy

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



ABS-CBN HAS CLEARED BROADcaster Julius Babao of allegations that he posted bail for a terror suspect, Dawud Santos.

If that is the result of the investigation conducted by ABS-CBN on the Babao affair, who am I to refute it?

* * *

Let's put an end to the controversy that has left many persons hurt in its wake: Babao, this columnist, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Rear Adm. Tirso Danga.

Another entity that was hurt was the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), whose report was the basis of the President's disclosure to this columnist.

But here's a parting shot: Okay, the ISAFP erred in saying Babao paid Dawud's bail bond.

But subsequent findings by this columnist show Babao acted as guarantor for Dawud's bail, which is practically the same thing as posting his bail.

Ma. Victoria Lim, bondswoman for Summit Insurance, the bonding company, said that if not for Babao, her company would not have posted the bail.

Many Muslims reportedly jump bail and the insurance companies that put up their bail bonds are left holding the bag, Lim said.

Babao, said Lim, personally talked to her over the phone and guaranteed for Dawud.

I'm sure Julius had "scooping the rival station" mindset when he guaranteed for Dawud, but to what extent must a reporter go to cover a story?

Let this be a lesson learned not only for Julius Babao but for all journalists, including myself, who cover controversial stories: We should never get personally involved with our subjects.

* * *

Presidential Legal Counsel Ma. Merceditas Navarrro-Gutierrez is an ideal choice for Ombudsman.

Her reported designation by President Arroyo to replace resigned Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo was no surprise to those who know her. Her record in her 21 years of public service is unblemished by any taint of corruption. (As an aside, most women public servants are incorruptible compared to their male counterparts However, when a woman official becomes corrupt, she's worse than three or four corrupt men put together.)

More than the fact that a woman is perceived to be less susceptible to graft and corruption, Secretary Gutierrez has a keen perception of the problem of corruption in government.

In her present post as presidential legal counsel, she is concurrently head of the Anti-Corruption Swift Action Team formed by the President to go after corrupt officials hammer and tongs.

The job familiarized her with all forms of corruption in the government bureaucracy.

* * *

A Japanese businessman has asked the intercession of the President for the release of his money amounting to ¥12,490,000 (between P5 and P6 million) that the Bureau of Customs has confiscated from him.

Shigeru Kaneko said the money was confiscated by customs authorities upon his arrival from Narita, Japan on Nov. 4. He failed to declare he had such an amount, which violates the country's customs and tariff code.

Through his lawyer Nelson Borja, the Japanese businessman said he was not aware of customs laws concerning the declaration with customs of a big amount of money carried by a foreigner.

Shigeru, engaged in the buying and selling of second-hand cars at the Subic Freeport, said that in the past he was robbed of a big amount of money after he left the Ninoy Aquino International Airport terminal building.

He said he declared the money with customs

METROBRIEFS

Happy ending

PUNTA PO KAMI SA "LENETA" !

THREE young boys ,ages 5 and 6, who just wanted to take a trip to Manila's Rizal Park were reunited with their parents yesterday. Brothers Jhomar and Jhomel Mariano, with their neighbor Mark Joseph Alipogpog of Barangay 8 Tupada Village, Sangandaan, Caloocan City, were reported missing by their parents last Sunday. A police report said the boys were playing in front of their house when they suddenly disappeared. "The boys said they wanted to go to the Rizal Park, but instead ended up in Navotas," said Anthony Alcantara, chief of the Crisis Intervention Unit of the City's Department of Social Welfare and Development. The boys were found walking aimlessly by an unidentified Navotas policeman who immediately brought them to the local DSWD "who later got in touch with the boys' parents." ***Nancy C. Carvajal***

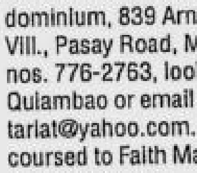
Tanker sparks fire

A GASOLINE tanker blew up and sparked a 20-minute blaze, leaving at least 2 persons hurt the other day along Kalayaan Avenue in Brgy. Central, Quezon City, according to Quezon City Police District Director Nicasio Radovan Jr. Fire officials said the explosion and fire of still unknown origin occurred at 4:13 p.m. near a Shell gas station. It was put out at 4:34 p.m. The still unidentified victims suffered only minor burns and were rushed to the hospital. ***DJ Yap***

Anvil Awards deadline Nov. 30

The deadline for submission of entries to the 41st Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines is on Nov. 30. Entries to the expanded Anvil Awards may be sent to the chair, Vic del Fierro Jr. c/o the PRSP Secretariat at G/F Tower 2 Unit C Midland Mansions Condominium, 839 Arnaiz Ave., Legazpi Vill., Pasay Road, Makati City. Tel. nos. 776-2763, look for Stephanie Quiambao or email at prsp_secretariat@yahoo.com. Inquiries can be coursed to Faith Manguiat at 817-4172/817-9975.

Romeo, Gertrudes need help



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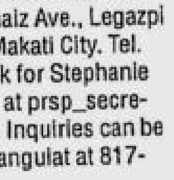

SORROMERO

ROMEO Samaniano, 58, is suffering from coronary heart disease that makes him suffer from chronic chest pains. Doctors at the Philippine Heart Center have recommended an operation for Romeo. Gertrudes Sorromero, 66, on the other hand, is suffering from diabetes, hypertension, rheumatism and has gall stones. Romeo was a former messenger for PT&T and has been unemployed for the last five years. His wife Nida's income as a laundrywoman can barely cover their everyday expenses for food and rent. Their only daughter Teresa, 15, has stopped schooling. Gertrudes, on the other hand, has been missing her medication for weeks now due to lack of funds. Single and unemployed, she is currently banking on help coming from her relatives, which is not enough to sustain her medication worth P3,500 per week. Romeo and Gertrudes are appealing to kindhearted readers for financial and medical assistance. Interested parties may contact Romeo at 09104165493 or at 668-1678 c/o Zenaida Saturnino; Gertrudes at 8903689 or 8903201. Donors may also deposit directly to Romeo's Equitable PCI Bank account # 0181-94119-7 (Marikina Branch).

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COMMUNITIES TAPPED FOR DRIVE

SPD mounts tight watch vs carjackers

By Jocelyn R. Uy, Tarra V. Quismundo and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WITH CARJACKING INCIDENTS RISING BY the day, the Southern Police District (SPD) ordered the setting up of checkpoints and tapped community precinct commanders and barangays to put up a watch against carjackers who appeared to have extended its operations in the area.

SPD Director Wilfredo Garcia said some 60 SPD personnel had undergone a three-day training program on basic skills in countering carjackings and bus robberies last week.

"The instructors were from the Metro Manila Development Authority, Traffic Management Group and our own Anti-Carnapping Unit," the police chief said.

The SPD Anti-Carnapping Unit (Ancar) has counted a total of 290 stolen vehicles—137 utility vehicles and 153 motorcycles—from January to October.

About 234 vehicles were recorded stolen while parked. There were 37 cases of forcible car robberies or "carjacking," while 19 incidents of cars that were borrowed from owners but were not returned were recorded by Ancar unit.

In follow-up operations, 73 utility vehicles and 27 motorcycles were recovered. Some 19 suspects were arrested and about 18 cases were already filed in court, police inspector Eduardo Tungol, Ancar unit chief said in his report.

Last week, Las Piñas City recorded its first carjacking incident when four car thieves forcibly took a Toyota Prado model 2005 from a resident along Barangay Manuyo 2.

The suspects dropped off the victim at Leveriza Street in Pasay City after withdrawing cash using the victim's automated teller machine (ATM) card.

More incidents

Meanwhile, another carjacking incident occurred along the Magallanes flyover in Makati City shortly after midnight yesterday.

Fideliz Elumba Jr., a cargo agent, yesterday lost his brand new Toyota Hi-Lux past midnight to five carjackers on a white Honda Civic who intercepted him at the Makati flyover as he was driving home from work.

He spent the next three and a half hours on a terrifying ride with the armed men who stripped him of his cash and valuables before dropping him off at Leveriza Street.

"I thought they were policemen apprehending me because my pickup didn't have license plates since I just bought it a week ago," Elumba said. The men forced his vehicle's doors open, and pushed him out of the driver's seat by poking their M16s at him.

"They told me to just cooperate. Then they took my wallet, my watch, my cellular phone, my ring, all the valuables I had. They asked me about the contents of my wallet, as if testing me if I would tell the truth. I just told them everything, I didn't want to get hurt," said Elumba. The men told him they were renegade soldiers of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan who were raising funds to overthrow the government, Elumba added.

The carjackers took cash amounting to P12,000 from the victim's wallet. They then asked Elumba for his ATM card pin. "My ATM account contained P154,000, but I could only withdraw a maximum of P20,000 a day," Elumba said. Before the gang's vehicle sped off, he was able to see the license plate's digits (566), but missed the letters.

Lost car

Fear also gripped another businessman on Tuesday afternoon after he lost a light blue Toyota Altis at the Ortigas Business Center, the scene of a violent confrontation between police and suspected car thieves on Nov. 7.

Daniel Alden De Leon, 37 told P02 Bobby Lumiwan he had just parked the car he was buying from businessman Dionisio Santos, about 1:20 p.m. Tuesday at a parking lot on ADB Avenue.

After getting his parking ticket, De Leon went to his office at the Mega Plaza Building.

He was ready to go home about 6 p.m. when he saw a Mitsubishi Lancer parked on the same spot where he had left the Altis.

The attendant told him a man, who did not have a parking ticket, had driven the vehicle out at 2 p.m. The man just gave the attendant P100 for the ticket he said he "lost."

But De Leon later discovered it was Santos who took the Altis because he said De Leon had not been paying his monthly installments. Saying he paid regularly, De Leon said he would still file car theft charges against Santos.

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

'Thailand is beatable,' says RP football coach

By Cedelf Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING that winning the country's first Southeast Asian Games football medal is a tall order, Philippine coach Aris Caslib yesterday expressed optimism of an RP victory over defending champion Thailand when they clash Nov. 23 at the Panaad pitch here.

"The team will change the image of Philippine football," Caslib said. "Internationally, people would say that Thailand will easily beat us but it's a different story because we'll have the crowd behind us."

The Philippines is hoping to break a 10-year losing slump in the Games. Its last victory came at the expense of Brunei, 1-0, during the Chiang Mai Games in 1995. From there, the closest the Filipino booters came to snatching a win was in 1999 when it lost to Laos, 3-2.

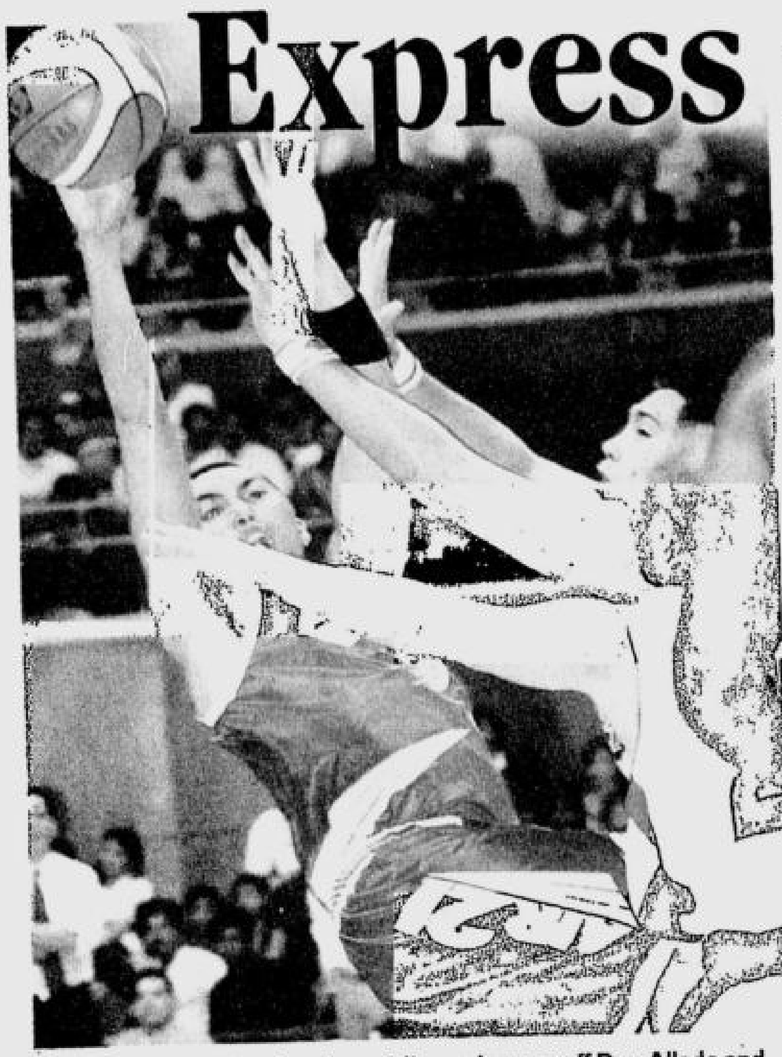
The national team beat West Negros College, 2-0, in a tune-up game Tuesday.

Filipino-British brothers Phil and James Younghusband—reserves of top-flight English club Chelsea—arrived here last week and are expected to be at the forefront of the RP team's campaign, along with four other foreign-born Filipinos.

The other reinforcements are Filipino-Briton Chad Gould, Felipo Bradio and Filipino-German Andy Prochnow.

Also in the Philippines' group are Cambodia and Malaysia, which the RP booters will face on Nov. 25 and 29, respectively, at the Panaad turf. Bracketed in Group B are Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia and Singapore. The country needs two wins to advance to the medal round.

Express rally to victory



AIR21'S Renren Ritualo takes a fallaway jumper off Don Allado and Jeffrey Cariaso of Alaska.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAMES TOMORROW (*Ynares Center*)
4:40 p.m.—Red Bull Barako vs Talk N Text
7:40 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs San Miguel Beer

By June Navarro

GARY DAVID REGISTERED A CAREER-high 28 points as Air21 rallied from 23 points down to repulse Alaska, 88-83, in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference before an overflow crowd last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

David had nine in the pivotal fourth period while Wynne Arboleda punctuated the Express' greatest comeback in franchise history with a three-pointer in the dying seconds to secure their fifth win in 10 games.

"I had already given up during the third quarter," said Air21 head coach Bo Perasol. "I just told them that if we are going to lose, let's lose with dignity."

Shawn Daniels, Ranidel De Ocampo, Wynne Arboleda and David refused to give up even after the Aces opened up a 69-46 lead lead.

Working behind an aggressive full-court press and several low-post plays anchored on Daniels, the Express slowly caught up with the Aces.

David's free throws with two minutes left finally gave the Express an 80-79 edge. De Ocampo later made it 82-79 with two more charities.

After Don Allado cut the margin to one, 81-82, De Ocampo laid up and added a free throw for 85-81. Tony de la Cruz struck to give Alaska some hope, 85-83, but Arboleda put the outcome beyond doubt with a triple with 16 seconds left that set the final score.

The Express' smothering defense in the fourth forced the Aces to commit 11 of their 24 turnovers while scoring only 14 points as against Air21's 36 in that period.

Artemus McClary had 15 points and 13 rebounds but was a non-factor during the decisive FedEx rally that sent the Aces to their third straight defeat and in a tie with the Red Bull Barako and the Express.

The Alaska collapse recalled a similar foldup by the Aces against the Purefoods Chunkee a month ago when the Giants rallied from 29 points to win in overtime, 86-83.

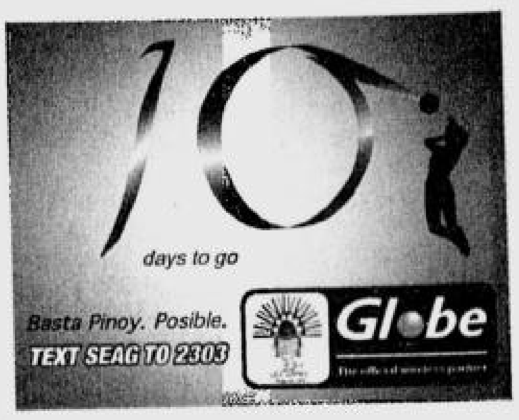
The Aces, who lost back-to-back games by an average margin of 20 points for the first time in 17 years, jumped to a 16-0 start in the opening minutes.

The scores:
First Game

AIR21 88—David 28, Arboleda 13, Daniels 12, De Ocampo 11, Tubid 10, Ritualo 8, Canaleta 2, Ferriols 2, De ocampo 2, Gonzales 0, Se 0, Fran 0.

ALASKA 83—McClary 15, Hugnatan 13, Dela Cruz 13, Cablay 11, Cariaso 9, Allado 9, Cortez 7, Thoss 4, Alvarez 2; Hawkins 0.

Quarters: 12-28, 37-46, 52-69, 88-83.



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Thai booters, riders arrive

A 65-STRONG CONTINGENT FROM THAILAND, made up of equestrian and football teams, planed in yesterday as foreign participants started arriving for the 23rd Southeast Asian Games which formally kicks off on Nov. 27.

Football will start at the Paglaum and Panaad pitches in Bacolod and the Marikina field on Sunday with the opening ceremonies scheduled a week later at the Quirino Grandstand.

The four-man sailing team of Malaysia arrived last Tuesday at the Clark Field International airport. The Singaporean sailing, equestrian, canoe and kayak teams are also already in the country as well as the equestrian and sailing bets from Malaysia. Myanmar and Indonesian sailors have also arrived like Brunei's equestrian entries. *Musong R. Castillo*

PSC expects record golden haul

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINES WILL SURPASS THE 91 gold medals it won the last time it hosted the Southeast Asian Games 14 years ago, and this could be enough for the country to win the overall title for the first time.

This was the confident assessment yesterday of Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez, who also noted that until the opening of the 23rd edition of the Games on Nov. 27, basketball could still be included in the calendar.

Ramirez did not give the exact number of gold medals the country will pick up this time, but said that it would definitely be more than the 49 it won in Vietnam two years ago and "higher" than the golden output in 1991, which was just two gold medals short of the overall title.

"I believe that both '91 and Vietnam can be surpassed," Ramirez said. "And we could be No. 1."

National training director Michael Keon on Friday predicted at least 92 and a maximum of 128 gold medals for the Filipinos.

One gold that got away this early is basketball, which was scrapped last week and has shown no signs of being put in the calendar with the Philippine Olympic Committee and the expelled Basketball Association of the Philippines still in a standoff.

Ramirez yesterday said that because there are no published reports that Malacañang is interested in basketball does not mean that President Macapagal-Arroyo does not want to see caging in the Games.

"But we have to respect the stand of people (Philippine Olympic Committee and Basketball Association of the Philippines leaders)," Ramirez said. "There's some possibility, although very remote. But I do believe in miracles.

"I am a positive man and until such time that the opening comes, only then can we say that basketball has totally been scrapped."

Ramirez refused to give even a hit of how basketball can be included in the roster at the last minute.

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Volleybelles eyeing SEAG silver medal

BACOLOD CITY—THIS EARLY, NATIONAL women's volleyball coach Ramil de Jesus is resigned to the thought of his team winning just the Southeast Asian Games silver medal.

"We are aiming for the silver," De Jesus said. "We don't want to raise expectations too high but if we reach the finals, we will give it our best."

Reigning titlist Thailand, the biggest stumbling block to the volleyball gold, is in a higher level when it comes to the quality of play, he added.

The RP volleybelles suffered a beating at the hands of the Thais during the Shakey's Invitationals in Manila last month.

The national squad, hoping to improve on a third place finish in the 2003 SEAG in Vietnam, is also plagued with injuries as setter Cristina Salak and Maureen Penetrante are still recovering from back and right knee injuries, respectively.

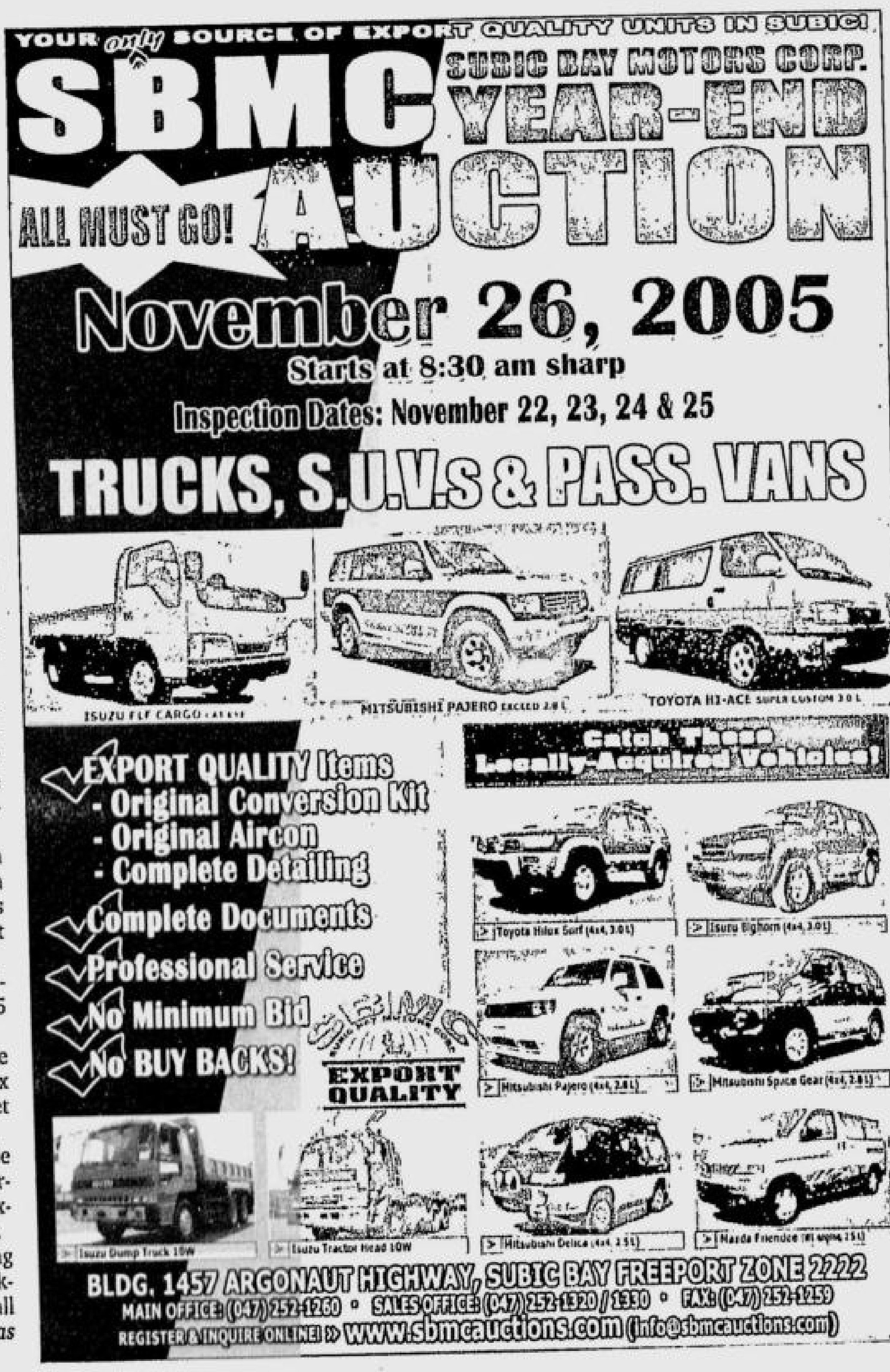
De Jesus, who arrived here with the team Tuesday, also noted that Penetrante, Monica Aleta, Amelia Guanco and Shermain Miles Peñano are competing in the biennial meet for the first time.

The indoor volleyball of the 16-day, 11-country conclave is set from Nov. 27 to Dec. 5 at the West Negros College Gym.

But the national teams have yet to practice at the official playing venue since the taraflex surface that will be used for the Games has yet to arrive.

Other members of the RP team are Rubie De Leon, siblings Marietta and Michelle Carolino, Mary Jean Balse, Johanna Carpio, Roxanne Pimentel and Cherry Rose Macatangay.

Meanwhile, the Bacolod SEAG Organizing Committee yesterday said that it is fast-tracking the construction of the beach volleyball venue at the St. La Salle ballfield. *Cedelf Tupas and Christian Irl Tan, PDI Visayas Bureau*



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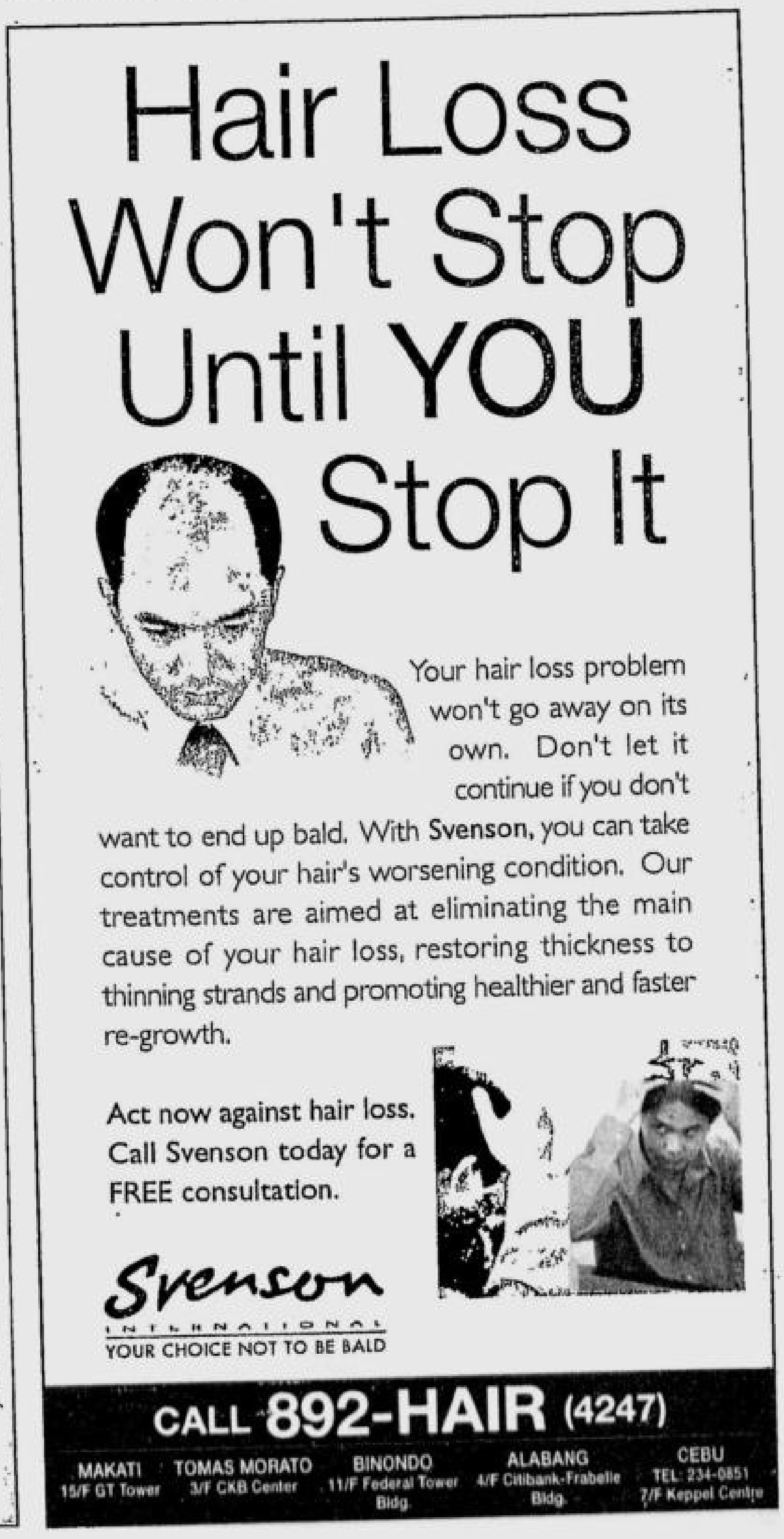

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PBL HEROES CUP

Granny Goose tackles Hapee-PCU five today

GAMES TODAY ***(JCSGO Gym, Cubao)***
2 p.m.—Hapee-PCU vs Granny Goose
4 p.m.—Montaña vs Far Eastern Insurance

STANDINGS	W	L
Magnolia	3	0
Harbour Centre	2	1
Granny Goose	2	1
Rain or Shine	2	1
Hapee-PCU	1	2
Montana	1	2
Toyota Otis	1	2
Far Eastern Ins.	0	3

ONE TEAM IS HOPING TO EXtend its winning streak, while the other is just trying to score its first.

The Granny Goose Tortillos eyes win No. 3 against the Hapee-Philippine Christian University squad even as Far Eastern Insurance goes for its first win against Montana Pawnshop today in the 2006 PBL Heroes Cup at the JCSGO gym in Cubao.

The Snackmasters are riding the crest of back-to-back victories, including a 74-59 rout of the Montana Jewels last week that boosted them into a tie for second place at 2-1 with Harbour Centre and Rain or Shine.

The 2 p.m. game also marks the first time that Hapee coach Junel Baculi will go against his former mentor Joe Lipa, who is now at the helm of Granny Goose team.

Baculi, owner of seven PBL conference titles, is hoping to recover from two successive losses after an opening win.

In the 4 p.m. game, the Jewels collide with the winless Far Eastern Insurance five seeking a second victory in four outings.

The Insurers, who dropped a 73-70 decision to Rain or Shine in their last game, will bank on Michael Bravo and Niño Marquez in their bid to crash the winner's circle.

Froilan Baguion and Al Magpayo are expected to lead Montaña, which lost to Harbour Centre, 60-68, in its previous game.

Meanwhile, Rain or Shine's top gunner Jojo Tangkay was named Player of the Week for his superb performance against the Insurers. The former pro averaged 24 points in the team's first two games. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

RIZA Zalameda returns a backhand to Thailand's Varanya Vijuksanaboon yesterday. RYAN LIM

Arevalo, 2 other RP bets gain 2nd round

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THREE FILIPINO TENNIS STARS, LED by homegrown and first leg runner-up Czarina Mae Arevalo, brushed off their respective rivals yesterday to barge into the second round of the $10,000 Holcim ITF Women's Circuit 2 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Arevalo underscored her status as the top RP campaigner in the coming Southeast Asian Games by ousting national teammate Anja Vanessa Peter.

She will next take on Israeli Efrat Zlotikamin, who reached the next round by besting sixth seed Briton Rebecca Fong, 6-3, 7-6(1).

Joining Arevalo in the second round are Fil-Americans and fellow nationals Riza Angela Zalameda and Denise Dy, who displayed fine forms in posting impressive victories.

The 19-year-old Zalameda wore out Thai Varanya Vijuksanaboon, who lost the first set and retired while training 2-0 in the second set.

Using her vaunted forehand, Zalameda made things more difficult for the Thai, who was suffering from dehydration when she gave up.

Dy also had an easy time hurdling fellow Filipina Aileen Rogan, 6-1, 6-0, to advance against world's No. 512 and top seed Taiwanese Hwang I-hsuan. Hwang advanced via a 6-0, 6-2 win over Fil-American qualifier Maureen Diaz.

Zalameda said she is just starting to get her rhythm though she displayed sharpness throughout the match.

"This is just the first round. I haven't played my best game yet," said Zalameda.

The UCLA standout will gun for a quarterfinal seat at 10:30 a.m. today against world No. 741 and seventh seed Korean Kim Hae-sung, who posted a 6-2, 6-0 triumph over Taiwanese Chen Yi, 6-2, 6-0.

In other matches, second seed Wilawan Choptang of Thailand ousted Taiwanese qualifier Kao Shao-yuan, 6-3, 6-4, to move up against Briton Natasha Khan, a 6-3, 6-0 winner over Korean Kim Yeon-ju.

First-leg champion Chan Wing-yau Venise of Hong Kong booted out third seed Korean Lyoo Suh Hee-sun, 6-3, 6-1, to advance against Briton Georgie Stoop, who beat local Jessica Agra, 6-2, 6-0.

In the doubles, top seeds Choptang and Hwang blasted Hong Kong qualifiers Zhang Ling and Chan, 7-5, 6-2, to reach the quarterfinals. They will next face Koreans Lee Jin-a and Lim Sae-mi, who downed local wild cards Arevalo and Peter, 6-4, 7-6 (5).

Also winning were third seeds Pichittra Thongdach of Thailand and Fong over local wild cards Trudy Gine Amoranto and Michelle Pang, 6-1, 6-1. Taiwanese Chen Yi and Kao Shao-yuan slipped past Koreans Lyoo Suh Hee-sun and Seo Soon-mi, 6-3, 6-1, while British tandem Rachael Hall and Georgie Stoop routed local qualifiers Alyssa Anne Labay and Fil-Spanish Edelyn Balanga, 6-1, 6-2.

Pacquiao pegged 7-5 favorite over Morales

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

PACQUIAO (right) and Morales

IN AN ASTOUNDING TWIST, FILIPINO SUPERstar Manny Pacquiao, who lost the first encounter, is again tabbed the favorite over Mexican icon Erik "El Terrible" Morales in their return bout on Jan. 21 at the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas.

This was the announcement made yesterday by Wynn Las Vegas Sportsbook Director John Avello, who pegged Pacquiao a 7-5 favorite over Morales despite the latter's victory in their first bout last March 19.

Before that first encounter, Pacquiao was picked by bookmakers to beat the vastly popular Morales.

As expected, the announcement shocked Morales' promoter Bob Arum, who was reportedly "astounded by the odds."

Pacquiao's promoter Gary Shaw did not disagree with the odds.

Yesterday, both Morales and Pacquiao met at a press conference organized by Top Rank in Beverly Hills, California, where it was again announced that the duo will duke it out in a 12-round super fight in the 130-lb category.

"This will make me train even harder," opined Morales to Fightnews, after the announcement.

As of yesterday, the Tijuana banger was already ahead of Pacquiao in terms of conditioning, as Morales had immediately gone back to training following his heart-breaking loss to Zahir Raheem last Sept. 10.

Pacquiao, meanwhile, is still trying to wrap up last-minute product endorsements and other involvement in cockfight and billiard circuits.

Pacquiao is set to arrive early morning tomorrow (Friday) from California and will then fly to Cebu to immediately start serious training.

The Jan. 21 rematch is dubbed "The Battle" and will be televised live on HBO pay-per-view.

Ongpauco vaults to 6th place

LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA—TYRONE ONGpauco of the Philippines banked on four big games to vault from 14th to sixth place after 12 games in the men's qualifying round of the 41st Qubica AMF Bowling World Cup Tuesday at the Gladiator Bowling Center here.

The 32-year-old Ongpauco rolled 1363 pinfalls to raise his total to 2637 for an average of 219.75. He sizzled with big games of 269,258,257 and 234 to offset low scores of 170 and 175.

Compatriot Ellen Ramos also made big strides in the women's division, scoring 1242 to jump from 23rd to 13th place with a 12-game output of 2383 for a 196 average.

Backed by Lufthansa, the two RP bets boosted their chances of making the cut to the top 24 in both divisions.

Canadian Michael Schmidt remained on top for the second straight day, carding a 12-game total of 2872. But it was Sweden's Anders Ohman who stole the limelight as he nearly shot back-to-back 300s.

Ohman, running fourth at 2664, rolled a perfect game on lanes 23 and 24 and then moved to the next two lanes to score 289. He fired 10 straight strikes before leaving the four pin standing for that 289. Schmidt shot 1459, 46 pins higher than his first 6-game tally.

Last year's beaten finalist, Petter Hansen of Norway, moved up to second on 2801, followed by Belgium's Gary Verbruggen (2769).

Wendy Chai of Malaysia and Lynda Barne of the United States rank 1-2 in the women's division.

WORLD AMATEUR

Payla wins, faces Cuban

MIANYANG, CHINA-FLYWEIGHT VIOLITO PAYla of the Philippines scored a referee-stopped-contest (RSC-outscored) victory over Pakistan's Nouman Karim to arrange a third round duel with hot favorite Andry Lafita Hernandez of Cuba Thursday in the World Senior Amateur Boxing Championships here.

This was the second straight win for the Athens Olympics veteran, left to carry the fight for the two-man Philippine team competing in this tournament which attracted more than 400 boxers from 80 countries.

Hernandez, a southpaw, continued the Cuban juggernaut when he beat Athens Olympics silver medalist Jerome Thomas of France on points.

"He (Hernandez) is beatable. He's a light-flyweight who went up to flyweight," Filipino coach Boy Velasco said.

"He never was able to beat Onyok," added Velasco, a member of the Philippine National Police who was referring to his now retired younger brother Mansueto "Onyok," an Atlanta Olympic silver medalist in the 48kg class.

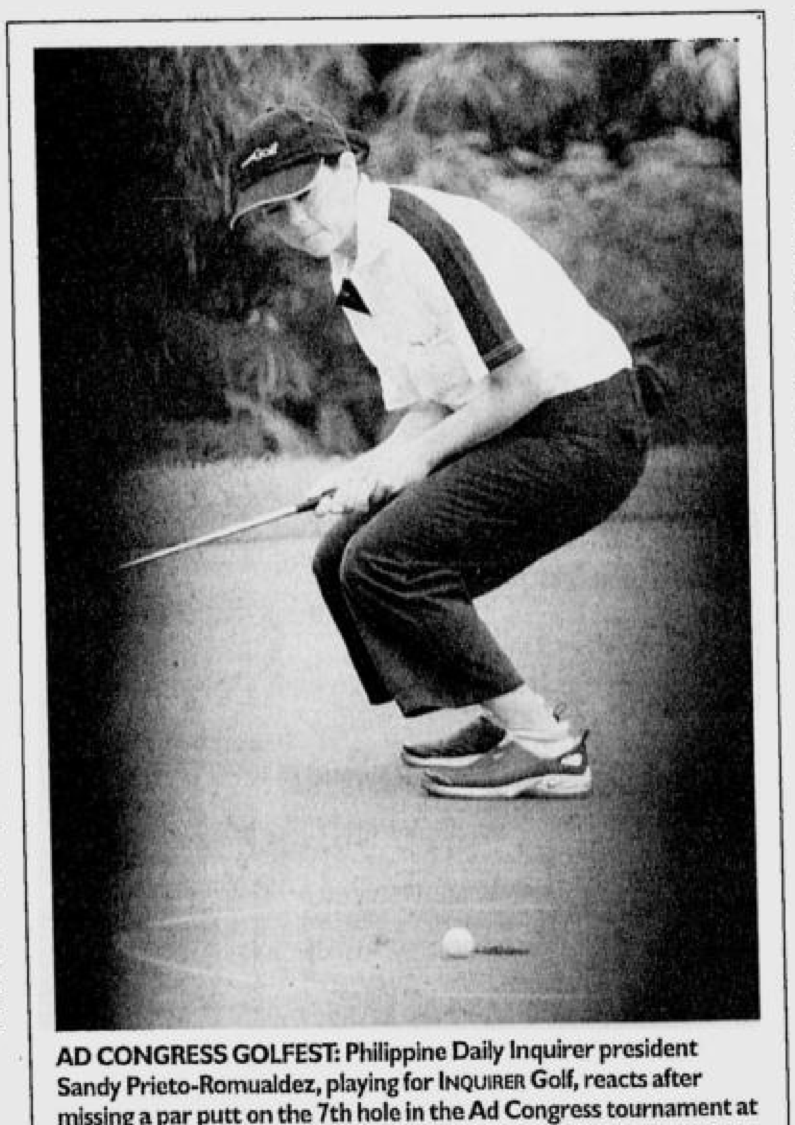
"We'll see," Lafita said.

Light-flyweight Godfrey Castry, the second Filipino bet in this biennial event, lost on points to Frenchman Aslan Redouinne 23 -29.

Castro of the Philippine Army fought the Frenchman on even terms till the third round.

Redouinne and Thomas recently trained with the SEAG-bound Filipino boxers in Baguio City.

Thomas, 25, used his longer reach to dominate the initial round, but things changed when Hernandez delivered short, crisp punches to the body. With a report from Dennis Eroa, *AFP*



AD CONGRESS GOLFEST: Philippine Daily Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, playing for INQUIRER Golf, reacts after missing a par putt on the 7th hole in the Ad Congress tournament at Alta Vista Golf and Country Club in Cebu City. TONEE DESPOJO

Pinoy Dancers shut out

By Jasmine W. Payo

BANGKOK—IT WAS ANOTHER DISMAL DAY for the Philippines Wednesday as its finalists in three sports bowed out without a medal in the 1st Asian Indoor Games here in Thailand.

The country's 11 dance couples, the prime hopes for medals, suffered an unexpected shutout even as China bagged four of the remaining six gold medals in dancesport on Tuesday night at the Huamark Sports Complex.

Only Belinda Adora and Michael Mendoza, ranked as RP's top pair, reached the final round of the Latin Single Dance-Paso Doble during the final day of competition.

"We're very disappointed," said Philippine Dancesport Council president Becky Garcia. "We have couples, like Dearlie (Gerodias) and Erolle (Melencio) who danced very well. And we were surprised that they didn't make it to the finals."

Chef de mission Harry Angping, however, consoled himself with the praises the Philippine dancesport team received.

"The Asian dancesport president said our level of performance has improved but other countries, especially China and Kazakhstan, have made big improvements," noted Angping. "There are still several events and I'm still hoping for a medal."

The Philippines also came close in the sports climbing competition in extreme sports, but Jaime Amiel Pahati faded in the final round of the men's Individual Difficulty event yesterday at the Suphanburi X Games Sports Stadium.

The 23-year-old Pahati posted an impressive 48-point average in the early rounds, but finished last among the eight finalists with only 22 points.

Korea bagged the gold with 48 points, followed by China with 38 and Iran with 36.

Filipina bets Elaina Kristine Flores, Barbara Joan Ramiro and Lissa Aireen Lesaca only reached the semifinal round of the women's Individual Difficulty event.

Peña finds race track tough

MACAU—DADO PEÑA SURVEYED THE MACAU race track on Tuesday and noted that some stretches would challenge the competitors' skills and wits in the practice runs for the Macau International Formula Three Grand Prix on Nov. 20.

"Some of the turns are really daunting," said Peña, son of Asian Formula Three chairman Ed Peña. "It offers different challenges but as I drove around the circuit (aboard a road car), I could say I'm quite familiar with it already."

Practice runs started Wednesday and will end Friday, with the battle for pole position set Saturday. Peña is competing in the Formula Renault race, one of the major side events of the actual race on Sunday.

Peña will race aboard a Champ Team car fined-tuned by Team Goddard-Minardi Asia, the same squad that helped him finish sixth among 25 drivers who competed in the recent Asian Formula Three Grand Prix.

Banal, Gregorio All-Star coaches

TALK 'N TEXT'S JOEL BANAL AIMS TO BEcome only the second coach to win two straight editions of the Philippine Basketball Association All-Star Game when he pits strategies against Purefoods Chunkee's Ryan Gregorio on Nov. 26 in Laoag City.

Banal hopes to duplicate the South All Stars conquest of the North All Stars, then handled by Red Bull's Yeng Guiao, in Cebu last year. Gregorio mentors North in the spectacle supported by Chowking, Accel, Xtreme Magic Sing, PGA Cars, Purefoods, Richwell Trading, Britmix, Westmont Pharmaceuticals and Toy Kingdom.

Eslao wows Rotax Open crowd at CCP

NOVICE KARTER OF THE YEAR PAOLO Eslao fashioned a sensational debut with the capture of pole position in the Rotax Max race at the SFIC-Kartmore Rotax Open Race, Carmona Circuit Philippines last Saturday.

Eslao, backed by Leonardo Quicho of Shanghai Delphi Auto A/C Systems, clocked the fastest lap time of 44.278 seconds after only a few practice runs with his newly break-in Rotax engine.

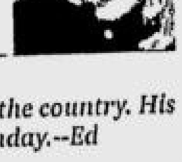
Coming in fresh after bagging the Formula SL championship crown in the recent Shell Super Karting Series, Paolo is poised to grab the Rotax Max crown in the next karting season.

Displaying maturity, the 17-year-old Eslao managed to win 1 out of 2 qualifying heats in the Rotax Open race.

Hounded by a punctured tire and severely damaged brake system, Eslao succeeded to keep his kart in the race but was thrown off course several times and landed 18th place at the end of the pre-finals race.

He staged a comeback and climbed from 18th to 4th place at the end of the final race, behind Rotax veterans Marcel Thenu, Matteo Guidicelli and overall race winner Ivan Carapiet.

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

Al S. Mendoza is out of the country. His column will resume Sunday.--Ed

Injured Federer grabs semis slot

SHANGHAI, CHINA—ROGER FEDERER won his second match to secure a semifinal spot at the Tennis Masters Cup, a massive relief Tuesday for organizers of the injury-marred tournament.

Two-time defending champion Federer, the only top-five player left in the event, held on for a 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (4) victory over sixth-seeded Ivan Ljubicic to extend his winning streak to 33 matches.

The 24-year-old Swiss star, playing with a heavy black brace on his right ankle, said he was more concerned about his stamina than his aching joint after a six-week layoff.

He had some treatment from a physiotherapist at a change of ends in the third set, but said it was only a precaution.

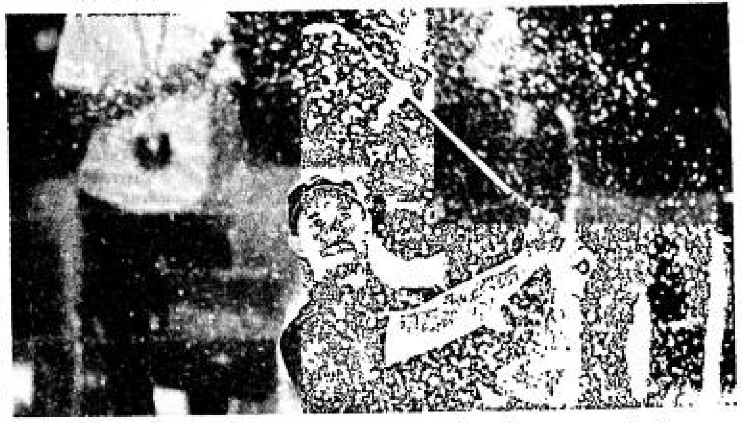
"I never doubted I was going to finish the match," he said. "I'm not 100 percent—that's obvious—it's been six weeks without a match and only one week being able to run properly."

Federer secured a semifinal spot at the season-ending event when Guillermo Coria, who at No. 6 has the next-highest ranking in the tournament, lost 7-5, 6-4 to fellow Argentine David Nalbandian in Tuesday's later Red Group match.

Federer and Coria, 0-2 at Shanghai, will play Thursday.

Coria said he felt physically OK, but was struggling with his serve. He had 14 double-faults against Nalbandian.

Nalbandian will play Ljubicic for a place in the semifinals. *AP*



TIGER Woods blasts out of trouble in the Phoenix pro-am charity tournament at the Phoenix Country Club in Japan. After two runner-up finishes, Woods is hoping to get back on the winning track by defending his title this weekend in Japan at the Dunlop Phoenix. REUTERS

James tows Cavs past Wizards

AI, C-Webb fan 76ers streak

CLEVELAND—LEBRON JAMES SCORED A SEASON-high 37 points, Larry Hughes added 22 in his first game against his former team and the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Washington Wizards 114-99 Tuesday night.

James, who helped recruit Hughes as a free agent during the offseason, scored only two points in the first quarter but followed with 14 in the second, 14 in the third and seven in the fourth before leaving with 2:32 left.

The Cavaliers won their fifth straight, and are 4-0 at home, winning by an average of 21 points at Quicken Loans Arena.

Hughes was only 6-of-18 from the field, but he added eight assists and made two 3-pointers and scored 12 points in the final 5:03 to thwart a Wizards rally.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored 34 points and added 12 assists, Chris Webber had 28 points and 16 rebounds and the 76ers won their fifth straight game, beating the winless Toronto Raptors, 104-92.

In Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard had 21 points and 20 boards to help the Magic hand the Charlotte Hornets their fifth straight loss, 85-77.

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Chauncey Billups scored 17 of his 25 points in the third quarter and Detroit improved to 7-0 with a comeback 115-110 victory over Boston.

In Miami, Dwyane Wade scored Miami's final eight points in the fourth quarter, and James Posey and Gary Payton each hit a key 3-pointer in overtime to help the Heat rally past the New Orleans Hornets, 109-102.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Nenad Krstic scored a season-high 25 points and the Nets held Ray Allen without a field goal for three quarters in a 109-99 victory over the Seattle Supersonics.

In Minneapolis, Tracy McGrady scored 25 points and made three consecutive clutch plays down the stretch to lead Houston past Minnesota, 94-89.

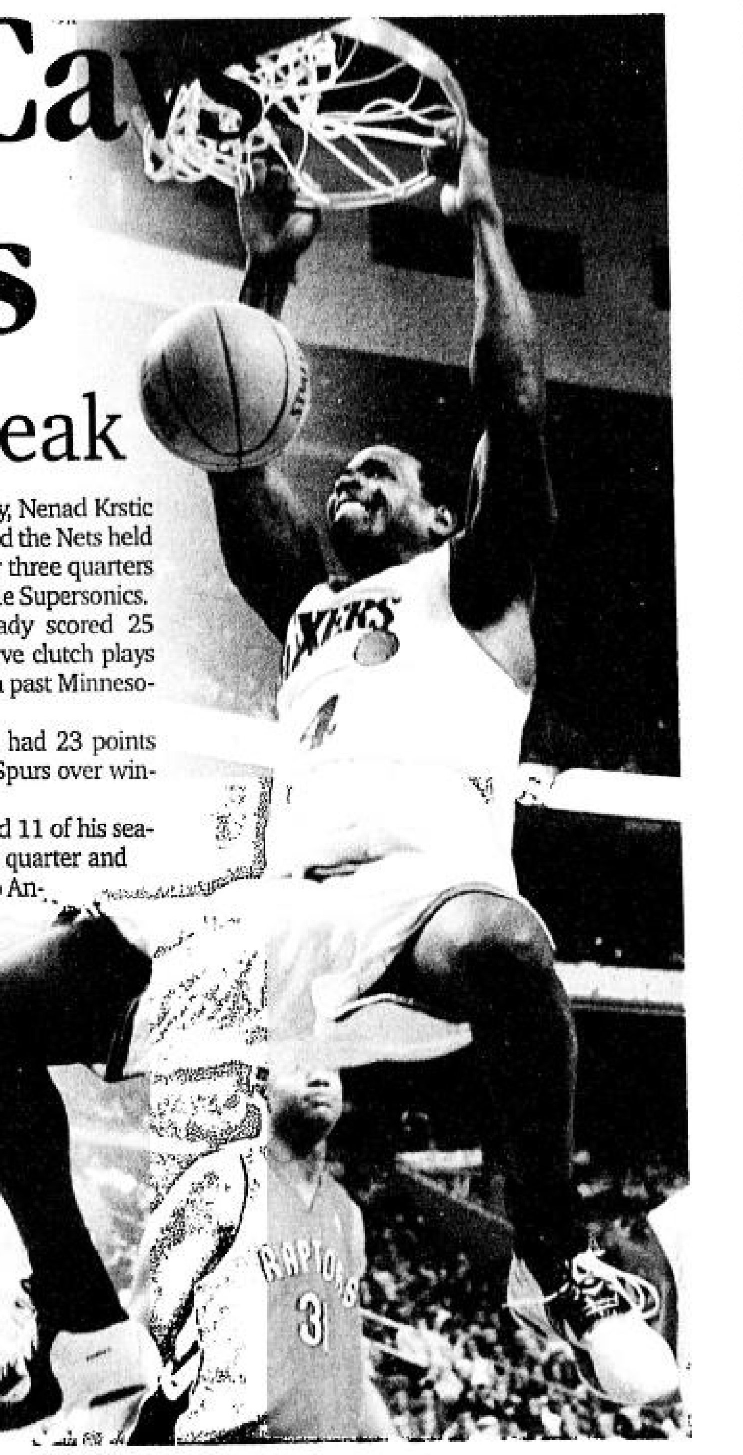
In San Antonio, Tim Duncan had 23 points and seven rebounds to lead the Spurs over winless Atlanta, 103-79.

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 11 of his season-high 35 points in the fourth quarter and DeSagana Diop blocked Carmelo Anthony with 2.9 seconds left, helping the Mavericks overcome a 19-point deficit to beat Denver, 83-80.

In Sacramento, California, Mike Bibby scored 25 points, Peja Stojakovic added 21 and the Kings beat short-handed Utah, 119-83.

In Los Angeles, Sam Cassell had 23 points and nine assists, Corey Maggette added 21 points and the Clippers breezed to a 109-85 rout of Milwaukee. *AP*

NBA ON TV: Solar Sports will air the Seattle Supersonics-Boston Celtics today. Telecast starts at 8:30 a.m.



WEBBER: Dominant AFP

SPORTSWATCH

Hobe nips PICAA foe

HOBE Bihon survived repeated rallies by erstwhile co-leader Nougat Candy to eke out a thrilling 65-63 win in the PICAA Filipino-Chinese basketball tournament at the Philippine Budhacare gym in Quezon City. Former Ginebra mainstay Wilmer Ong split his free throws with 16 seconds left and then put up a strong defense on the other end of the floor to power Hobe to its second straight win after dropping its opening-day assignment. Overshadowed by Hobe's win was Chin Chin Black Gulaman, which demolished Dumbo Construction, 132-96.

JVC badminton gets going

A BANNER field of 97 teams, including 55 squads in the centerpiece college division, begins its quest for badminton supremacy in the JVC Interscholastics Championships today with the qualifying stage at the PowerSmash Badminton Center. Top seed defending champion University of Santo Tomas takes on College of St. Benilde at 3 p.m. The top eight finishers will advance to the quarterfinals on Nov. 21 at the Glorietta. For details and updates, log on to www.jvcbadminton.com. The P300,000 championships is organized by IMG and backed by Planet Sports, Bingo Bonanza, L Timestudio, Rudy Project, Gillette, Bacchus Energy Drink, Alaska, Lactacyd, Sunbolt, Coffee House, Accel, Pinoy Exchange.Com, Solar Sports, Ayala Center, PowerSmash and Magic 89.9.

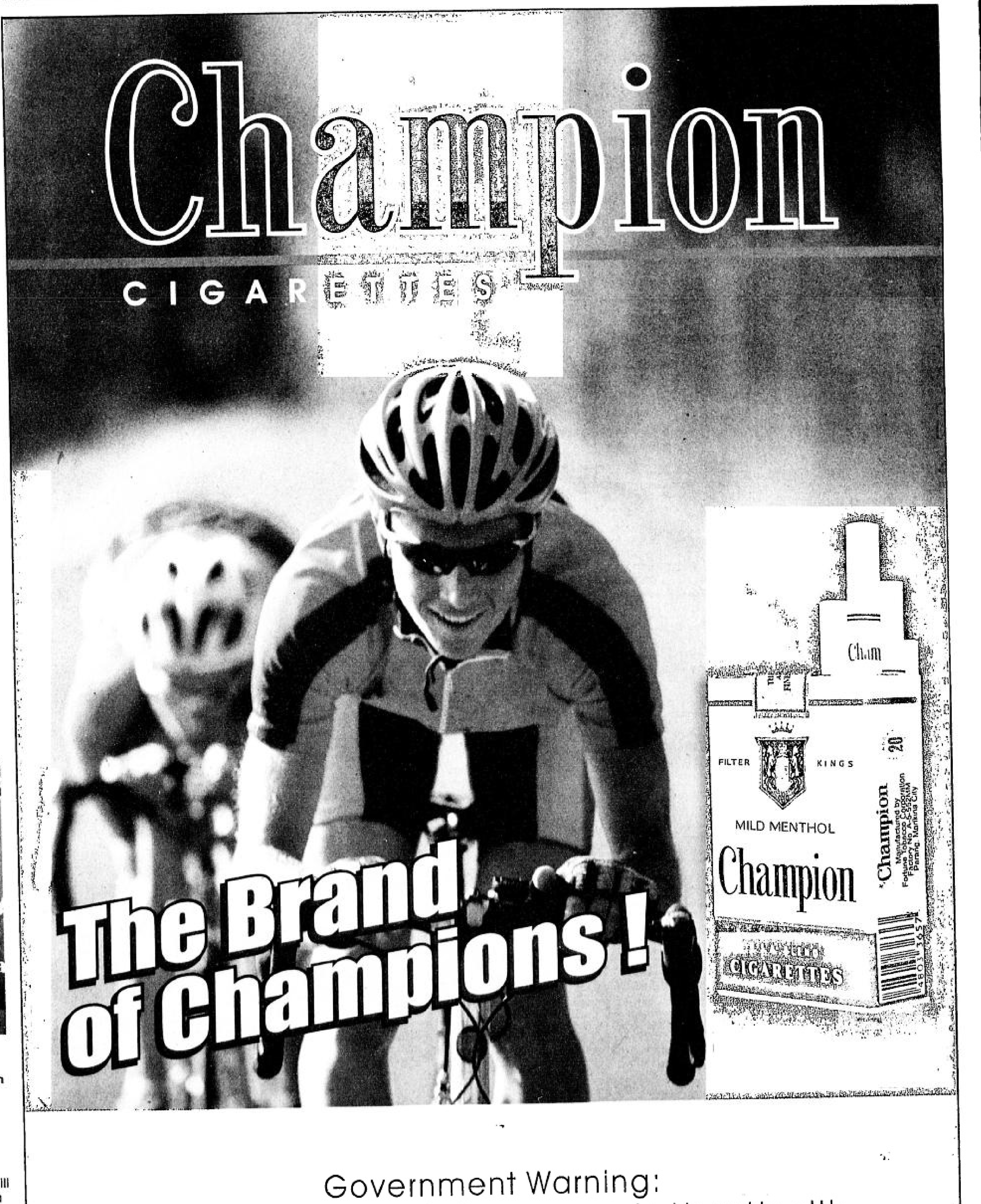
PCU-Dasma, Lyceum score

DEFENDING champion Philippine Christian U-Dasma and Lyceum-Calamba fashioned out contrasting victories in the continuation of the 6th Southern Luzon Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SLCUAA) men's basketball competitions at the Colegio San Agustin-Biñan gym recently. The Dolphins defeated STI-Sta. Rosa, 56-54 victory—its fourth in as many games. On the other hand, the Lyceum Matrix, who are first-timers in the league, blasted AMA Las Piñas, 86-65 for its second victory in three games. In another men's senior game, San Pedro College of Business Administration turned back St. Francis of Assisi College-Bacoor, 86-78.

BEST SOCKS: Babeth Dalde (HR Officer) and Niño S. Mas (Brand Manager) receive the plaque of recognition given to Burlington Socks, official socks of the PBA, as brand champion during the recent Tribute to the Best awarding ceremony at the Fiesta Pavilion, Manila Hilton.

San Juan hosts derby

THE NEW management of San Juan Coliseum will stage the Daytime 4-stag derby on Nov. 23. With more than 100 fights expected, the event will start promptly at 12 noon, said Boy de Roca and *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio who are providing support in this derby, which is also backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. The guaranteed prize is a whopping P500,000. Entry fee is P11,000. For details, call 7255665, 7255369 and 7277086.



Government Warning:
Cigarette Smoking is Dangerous to Your Health.

'Stealth ads' in H'wood

LOS ANGELES—TWO HOLLYWOOD UNIONS have called for new limits on the practice of weaving commercial brands into the story lines of movies and TV shows, saying so-called product placement has gotten out of hand.

The Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild also called for the actors and writers who do the extra product-promotion work to be paid more. The unions said serious ethical and financial questions were raised by a recent proliferation of product placements, which they said grew by 44 percent in films and 84 percent in television last year.

Code of conduct

The unions called for a code of conduct that would make it clear from the start of a program that viewers would be watching scenes in which companies have paid for their products to be used.

The unions said that revenues generated last year from product placement deals reached more than $1 billion.

In an eight-page policy paper on the issue, the Writers Guild cited as an example the third season of NBC reality show

"The Apprentice," in which Burger King, Dove Body Wash, Sony PlayStation, Verizon Wireless and Visa reportedly paid upward of $2 million apiece have their products incorporated into an episode of the show.

Patric Verrone, president of the Writers Guild, West, said traditional network standards governing commercial product placement "are increasingly being swept aside in favor of product integration and branded entertainment."

He added: "In their race to the bottom line to create the so-called new business model, network and advertising executives are ignoring the public's interest and demanding that creative artists participate in stealth advertising disguised as a story."

SAG and the WGA added that if they could not win an agreement with producers on the issue, they would file a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission, which regulates broadcast television. *Reuters*

DID YOU KNOW...

POP diva **Kuh Ledesma** delighted the PDI's library staff when she dropped by after an interview with INQUIRER Entertainment. She asked to be shown her picture files and, as she flipped through them, she gasped and shrieked at the sight of the most unflattering ones. "*Ano ba 'yan?*" "*Juskoday!*" Kuh said as she begged the startled custodians to destroy the offending photographs. She wasn't kidding, either.

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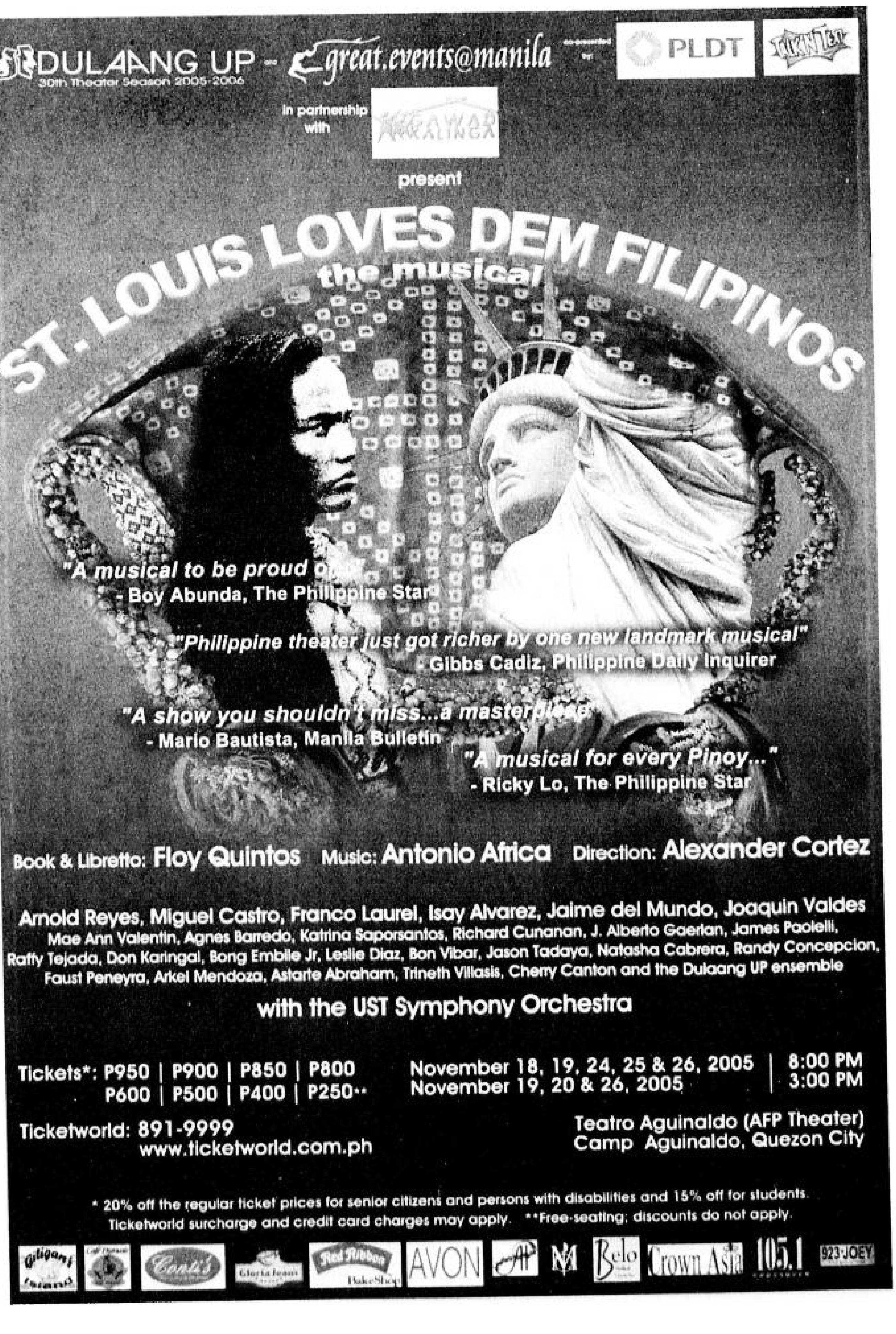
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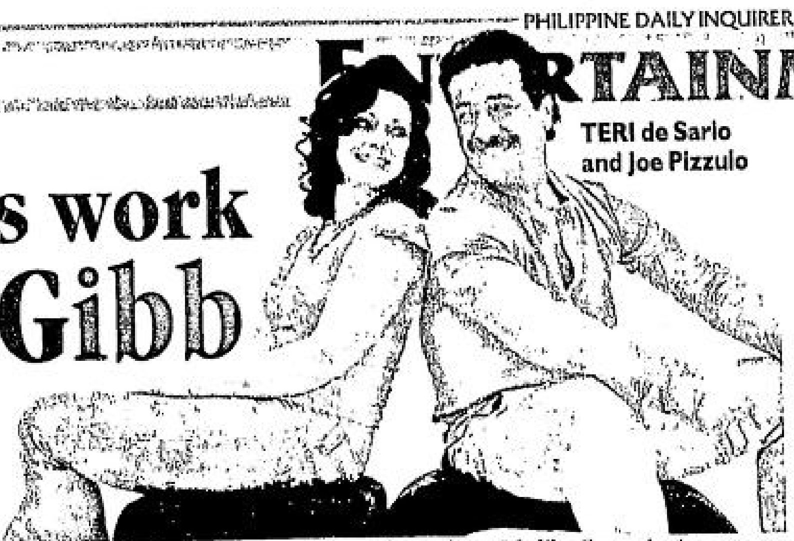
Teri recalls work with Barry Gibb



TERI de Sario and Joe Pizzulo

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

TERI DE SARIO CREDITS BARRY Gibb for the first major break of her music career.

She recalls the first time she met him in the '70s, in the heat of the disco craze, in which the Bee Gees and "Saturday Night Fever" figure prominently: "He introduced himself as a record producer ... gave me a choice of five songs, including 'Ain't Nothin' Gonna Keep Me From You'."

That particular song went on to become one of the biggest hits of the disco era, and it invariably embedded De Sario's name in the consciousness of Filipinos who once partied at Where Else and other dance clubs.

De Sario is in town for a one-night concert on Nov. 19 at the Araneta Coliseum. She's singing back-to-back with Joe Pizzulo, former lead vocalist for Sergio Mendes. Local guests include Nina, Luke Mejares and Passage.

What's surprising, De Sario says, is that she didn't really enjoy working with Gibb. "Barry was good-looking but very strict. I wasn't allowed to do anything except follow his instructions. It was difficult for me because I was a jazz singer. In the end, I think I sounded something like one of the Gibb sisters!"

Born in Chicago and raised in Florida, De Sario began singing at age 10 and loved music so much, she moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career. When she hit pay dirt with "Ain't Nothin' Gonna Keep Me From You," a friend from high school and musician named KC (leader of the Sunshine Band) invited De Sario to record more songs.

SHOW TIME

Small audience

A number of these tunes, such as "Yes, I'm Ready," "It Takes A Man And A Woman," and most especially the Broadway piece "Fallin'," remain in the regular program lists of many FM radio stations in the Philippines.

"I like singing to a small audience," De Sario reveals.

In that case, isn't the Araneta Coliseum too big for comfort?

"Well," she says, "sometimes it's easier with a large audience because you can look at them as 'one eye,' you know, unlike in a small show where you have to establish contact with almost each face in the crowd."

Although she's not much in the limelight these days, De Sario finds fulfillment in being a music teacher in Arizona, USA and Germany, where she once taught in a conservatory in Hamburg. "I actually feel free to do what I love doing these days. It's like I'm enjoying my career only now."

This is her second trip to Manila since 1985, and the first time she will be singing together with Pizzulo.

Pizzulo was here only six months ago, to perform with fellow Sergio Mendes alumni Lou Pardini and Kevyn Lettau also at the Big Dome. He says that last gig was remarkable and that the audience was phenomenal for its appreciation of music. "Filipinos listen to music the way professional musicians would listen to it seriously."

Asked if he had any formal training, Pizzulo replied: "I went to night-club school." Having lent his singing prowess in at least 100 albums of other artists, Pizzulo is most recognizable for his powerful, soaring vocals in pop hits like "I'm Never Gonna Give You Up," "What Do We Mean To Each Other," Never Gonna Let You Go" and "Take This Love."

Araneta Center Leisure Guide
CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 HARRY POTTER
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
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HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12:20 / 12:40 / 1:20 / 2:20
3:20 / 3:40 / 4:20 / 5:20 / 6:20
6:40 / 7:20 / 8:20 / 9:20 / 9:40
THE FOUR BROTHERS
1:45 / 4:10 / 6:35 / 9:00
FLIGHT PLAN
12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
1:15 / 4:00 / 6:45 / 9:30
THE 40 YR OLD VIRGIN
1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
WAITING
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
① HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET
11:30 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30
② HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET
12:10 R5 / 1:55 / 4:55 / 7:55
③ FLIGHT PLAN
1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
④ ISPIRITISTA
12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00
⑤ THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
12:00 / 2:45 / 5:30 / 8:15
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ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
MYMP... BEST - CONCERT
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TERI DE SARIO & JOE PIZZULO
BACK 2 BASICS CONCERT Nov. 19, Sat. 8 pm
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SPIN CITY

CARLY Simon

X'mas album

TOTI FUENTES AND Rico Puno have brought together an all-star cast of recording artists, singers, and musical theater actors for "Rico J. Puno and Friends," a Christmas album.

Bibsy Carballo, executive producer, announced that participants in this "unexpected duets and trios" include Ricky Davao, Jackielou Blanco, Jenine Desiderio, Ivy Violan, Richard Merk, Jacqui Magno, Bodjie Pascua, Miguel Castro, Tosca Puno, Kim Diaz, Roanne Mallari and Tirso Cruz III. Also featured are the CY Boys and the St. John's Chorale. Toti Fuentes produced and arranged all the tracks. Call 724-1762 or (0917) 407-6103.

Romance by Carly Simon

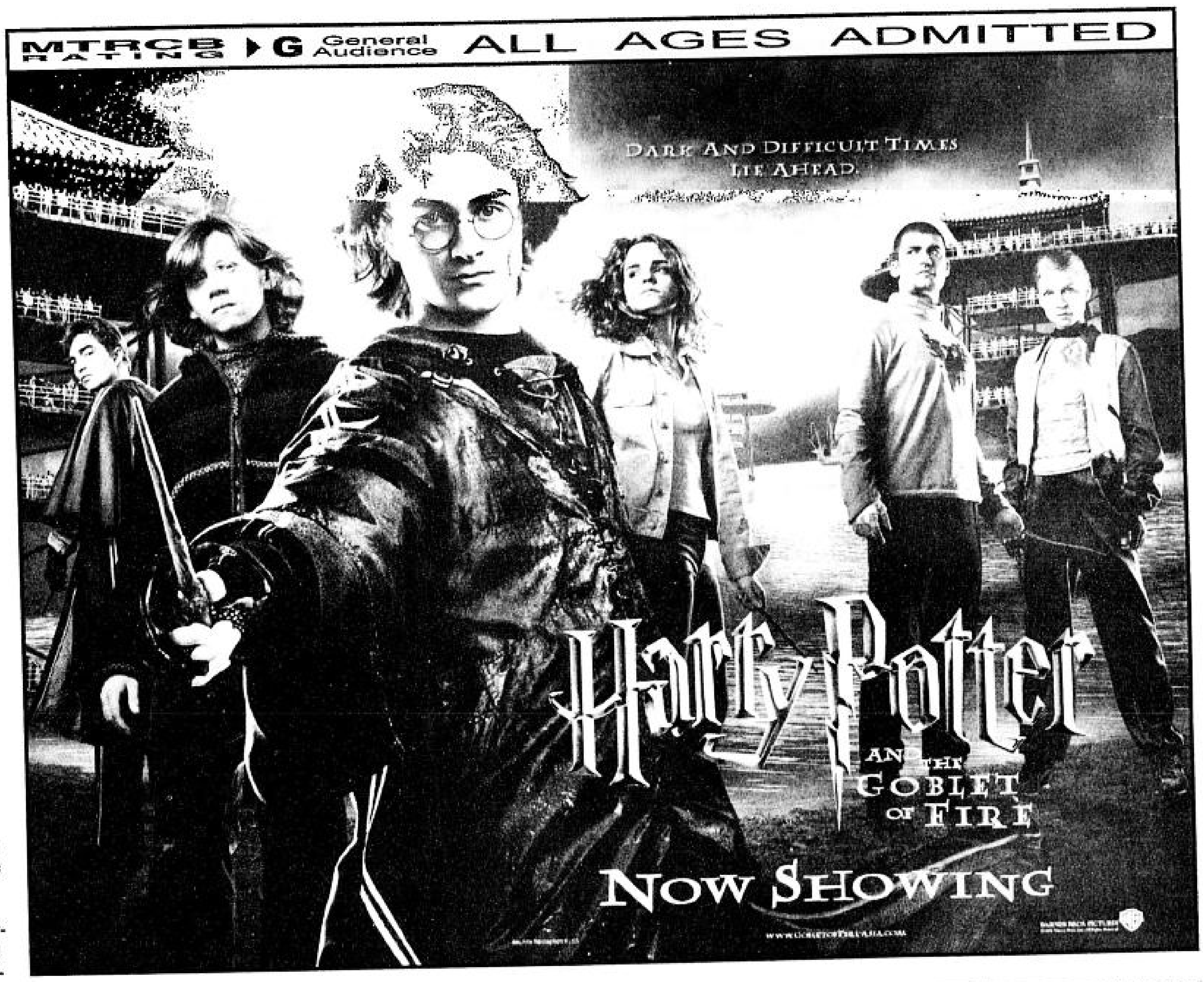
CARLY SIMON is back with "Moonlight Serenade," a new collection of romantic standards. Recorded from late 2004 to early 2005, the album includes, aside from the title track, "I've Got You Under My Skin," "I Only Have Eyes For You," "Moonglow," "In The Still Of The Night," "Alone Together," "Where Or When," "The More I See You," "My One And Only Love," "All The Things You Are" and "How Long Has This Been Going On."

London charts

LONDON— Madonna recorded her 11th British No. 1 in the music charts last week with her new single "Hung Up," which samples heavily from the 1979 Abba hit "Gimme Gimme Gimme".

Madonna, 47, had her first number one in the UK in 1985. The single is from her album "Confessions on a Dancefloor."

Irish boyband Westlife slid to second place with "You Raise Me Up," according to the Official UK Charts Company. *Reuters*



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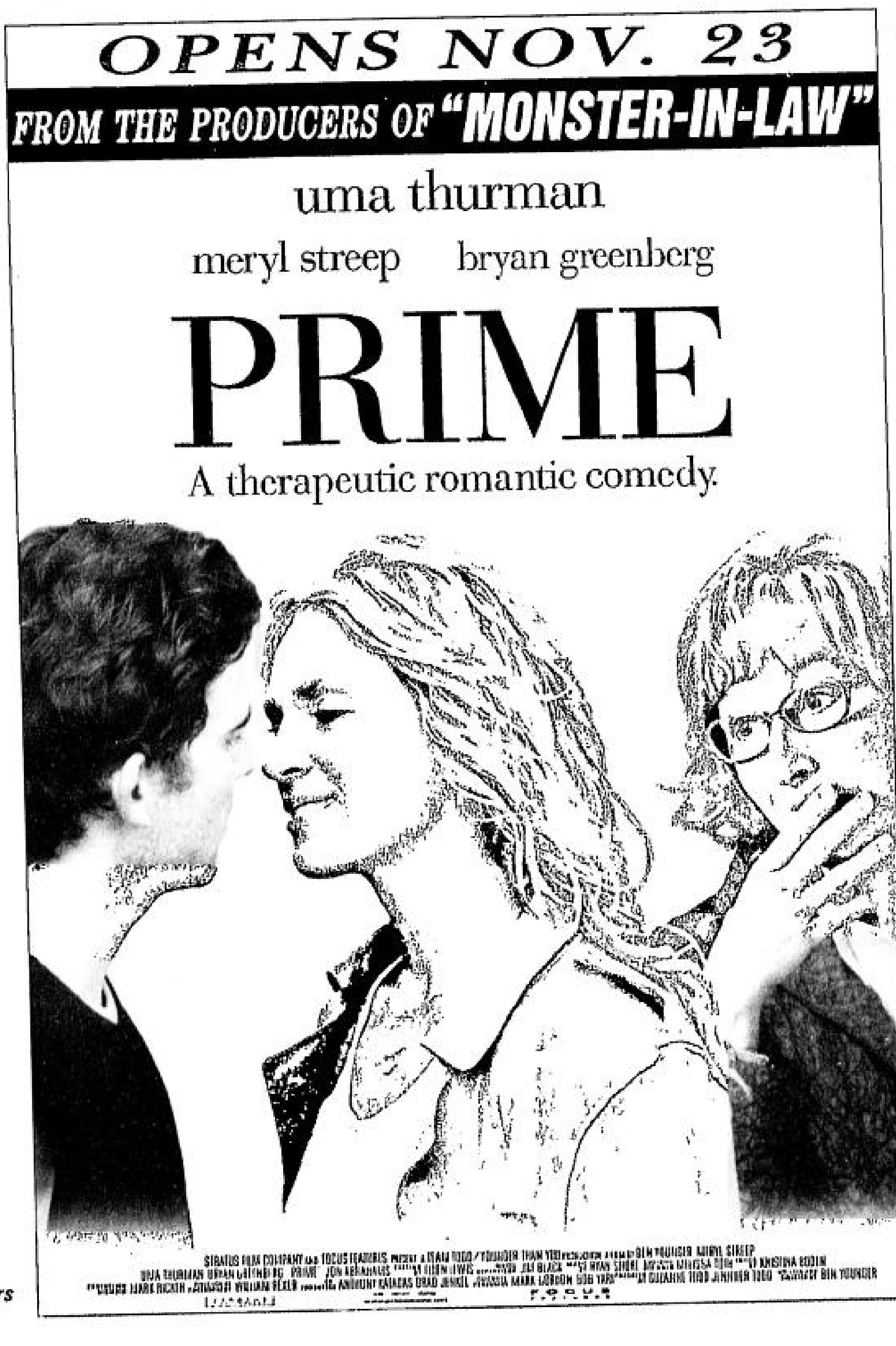

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Megamall EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE Nov. 21 • Cinema 1
Manila JUST LIKE HEAVEN Nov. 25 • Cinema 1
Megamall ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS Nov. 29 • Cinema 2
Megamall AN UNFINISHED LIFE Dec. 1 • Cinema 2
Megamall THE FOG Dec. 5 • Cinema 1

FILM FESTIVAL
Megamall ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL
Nov. 17-19 Cinema 6
Nov. 11-13 Cinema 2

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:00MF/03:10/06:20/09:30LMF
2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:40MF/03:50/10:10LMF

MEGAMALL
1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11:35FS/12:05MF/03:15/06:25 09:10LFS/09:40LMF/12:20END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 01:10FS/01:30MF/04:40 07:45LMF/10:30END
2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:00FS/12:10MF/03:20/06:30 09:15LFS/09:30LMF/12:25END
3 FLIGHTPLAN 11:50FS/12:00MF/01:54/03:48/05:42/07:36 09:16LFS/09:30LMF/11:10END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 LORD OF WAR
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 FLIGHTPLAN
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 LEGEND OF ZORRO
9 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
10 TRUMPETS: LITTLE MERMAID
11 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12 DOOM

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FLIGHTPLAN
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 CRY WOLF
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 WAITING
9 DEUCE BIGALOW
10 DOOM

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 LEGEND OF ZORRO

SM VALENZUELA
1 FLIGHTPLAN
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 MY SASSY GIRL
2 LAND OF THE DEAD
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 LEGEND OF ZORRO
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
8 WAITING
9 FLIGHTPLAN
10 DOOM
11 CRY WOLF
12 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FLIGHTPLAN
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 CRY WOLF
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 WAITING
9 DEUCE BIGALOW
10 DOOM

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 LEGEND OF ZORRO
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 FOUR BROTHERS
6 FLIGHTPLAN
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
8 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY MANILA
1 FLIGHTPLAN
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 WAITING
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 FOUR BROTHERS
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 DOOM
9 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
10 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
11 AB-NORMAL BEAUTY
12 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN

SM CINEMA SAN LAZARO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 WAITING
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

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1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 FLIGHTPLAN
6 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 FLIGHTPLAN
3 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY BACOOR
1 CRY WOLF
2 FOUR BROTHERS
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FLIGHTPLAN
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 ISPIRITISTA
7 LEGEND OF ZORRO
8 DOOM

SM CITY MARILAO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 FOUR BROTHERS
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY LUCENA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 FOUR BROTHERS
4 FLIGHTPLAN

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 FLIGHTPLAN
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 DOOM

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 TRANSPORTER 2
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 DOOM
7 LEGEND OF ZORRO
8 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY ILOILO
1 DOOM
2 RESERVED
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FLIGHTPLAN
5 LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
7 RESERVED
8 WAITING

SM CITY DAVAO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 DOOM
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

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No adult songs for child singers, please

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE YOUNG CONTESTANTS ON CHANNEL 2's kiddie singing contest, "Little Big Star," appear to be in a quandary: They're children, and yet many of them choose "adult" songs to sing, because such songs provide them a better chance to show off their belting or "*birit*" singing styles.

The show is a competition, after all, with 50 percent of each contestant's grade going to vocal quality, and 50 percent to stellar appeal. So, the young contestants (and their parents) feel that they have to really show off their voices to win the judges' nod.

On the *other* hand, the contestants are *children*, so it's disturbing and even shocking to sometimes hear them singing songs that are too adult for them.

On a recent telecast, we were dismayed to hear the juvenile singers dishing out too mature lyrics like:

"Diamonds are forever… I've no fear that they might desert me… I don't need love."

"He's broken (my heart) before… Somebody save this heart this time."

"I'm staying and you're gonna love me… Oooh, oooh, love me!"

"There's more to life than only bitterness and lies… I'd give away my soul to hold you once again!"

"(I'll go) through the fire for a chance to be with you again!"

It isn't healthy for child singers to wrap their voices and sensibilities around such grown-up lyrics, and their parents should be rapped for making them do so.

Sure, the adult songs stretch the kids' voices, but their misguided effort to impress the judges turns out to be counter-productive, because the jurors have plainly stated that they prefer kids who sing like kids!

Last Saturday, for instance, the two winners, **Myka** (younger category) and **Ronald** (older category), were pint-sized and sang like the children they were.

Conversely, the contestants they defeated were much taller and sang more mature songs with well-developed voices. Yes, they were good singers—but *not* for a *kiddie* singing tilt like "Little Big Star."

We trust that this turn of events will convince the parents of young singers not to make their children sing adult songs, and to look and sound like the mature singers they're *not*.

This is an important realization not just for the young contestants and their parents at home have to learn that it isn't "cute" for them to dress their kids up like pint-sized adults, and make them behave accordingly.

Children should be given the freedom to be children, and to enjoy their childhood. They'll grow up soon enough, so why rush it?

Parents' misguided efforts to impress judges is proving to be counter-productive

Best bets on HBO

FILM buffs who complain that they don't get to see enough good movies can take heart: our cable film channels offer some promising titles this month.

On HBO, the treats include: "Gattaca" with **Uma Thurman**, **Ethan Hawke** and **Jude Law**, a sci-fi film about genetic engineering.

"JFK" with **Kevin Costner**, **Gary Oldman**, **Sissy Spacek** and **Tommy Lee Jones**, **Oliver Stone** directing.

"Lost in Translation." **Sofia Coppola** sets her film in Tokyo, and directs **Bill Murray** and **Scarlett Johansson**.

"Mack the Knife," the film version of Bertolt Brecht, with Raul Julia, Richard Harris and Julie Walters.

"Matchstick Men," directed by **Ridley Scott** and starring **Nicolas Cage** and **Sam Rockwell**.

"That Championship Season," a searing film about midlife crisis, is written and directed by **Jason Miller**, and topbills **Bruce Dern**, **Stacy Keach** and **Robert Mitchum**.

"The Boxer," about a political prisoner who returns to the Belfast neighborhood of his youth, stars **Daniel Day-Lewis** and **Emily Watson**.

And "The Life of David Gale" stars **Kevin Spacey** as a man on death row who's rescued by a gutsy journalist (**Kate Winslet**).

Kim Flores

IVORY Music is releasing young singer **Kim Flores**' first album, "Something at First Sight." The compilation's 12 songs are mostly composed by **Edith Gallardo** and arranged by **Nino Regalado**.

On the concert front, Kim is a guest in **Regine Velasquez**'s "Reflections" performance series at Aliw Theater, and in **Erick Santos**' "Paskong Pasasalamat" at Marikina Riverbanks on Dec. 3. Call 4353808.

Delightful …

From page A32

"suffering" of putting up with Franzen's *pasaway* ways?

Guess list

Guess who this male TV personality is! He has been getting bad publicity lately but somehow news never comes out about his life away from the cameras, much to the dismay of the women he's been involved with. He's committed at this time, but his girlfriend is clueless about his dark secrets and shady personality. Funny that his significant other only knows insignificant details about him!

Guess who this young actress/singer is! She's very simple, soft-spoken and well-educated. The young star used to be the favorite of her high school friends. But the tide has changed. Now that she has a top-rating show, her old friends say she's not the same. Sometimes fame can untame even the meekest ones.

Guess who this not-so-young chanteuse is! An aspiring make-up artist was excited to fix her up for a shoot. But the singer kept complaining while her make-up was being done. The poor make-up artist got shocked when the singer snatched away the brush and insisted on doing her own make-up instead. Will they ever kiss and make up for vanity's sake?

Guess in Back2Basics

It was an idea whose time has come. Seven years ago, California Clothing Inc. (head licensee of Guess? USA) chair and CEO Victor Siasat hit upon this idea of merging classics with pop, of bringing orchestra music to the masses. This would mean bringing the music of Beethoven, Mozart and Chopin to the malls—where Juan de la Cruz would always hie off to beat the summer heat, or just to banish his woes away.

And it didn't matter whether he came in his favorite tattered *maong* and worn-out T-shirt. All he needed was a Filipino's natural love for music.

Thus was the Guess? Philharmonic series born, after the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, which played with top artists in the concert series. Guess? continues this time-honored tradition by presenting "Back 2 Basics," a concert featuring Teri de Sario and Joe Pizzulo at Araneta Coliseum on Saturday, Nov. 19. It will be a night of memories, the kind that brings back the good old feelings all over again.

Best resto/bar

There are things that are so familiar to the eye already that you sometimes forget how long it has been there—only to miss out on a great find. You should rediscover a place that you probably always see on your trips to the Shangri-la Mall. The Watering Hole, my favorite hangout, has been around for 11 years. More so because the Philippine Marketing Excellence Award has awarded it and named it the Best Filipino Resto/Bar in Metro Manila. What an accomplishment! This actually does not come as surprise since for so long they have served delicious Filipino food at great prices. If you haven't visited, it is about time that you did! See you at the Hole!

(Email wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)

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CINEMA 4 HARRY POTTER & The GOBLET OF FIRE GP 11:50, 3:20, 6:45, 10:10
CINEMA 5 HARRY POTTER & The GOBLET OF FIRE GP 11:20, 2:45, 6:10, 9:40

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2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE MTRCB GP 12 30, 3 45, 10 15
3 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE MTRCB GP 12 00, 3 15, 6:30, 9:45
4 FLIGHTPLAN MTRCB PG-13 1.20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10.00
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HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP 11:30,2:30,5:30,8:30	FLIGHT PLAN PG13 1:00,3:20,5:40	HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30

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1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11:15, 2:40, 6:05, 9:30 GP
2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:45, 4:10, 7:35, 11:00 GP
3 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:00, 3:25, 6:50, 10:15 GP
4 FLIGHT PLAN 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13

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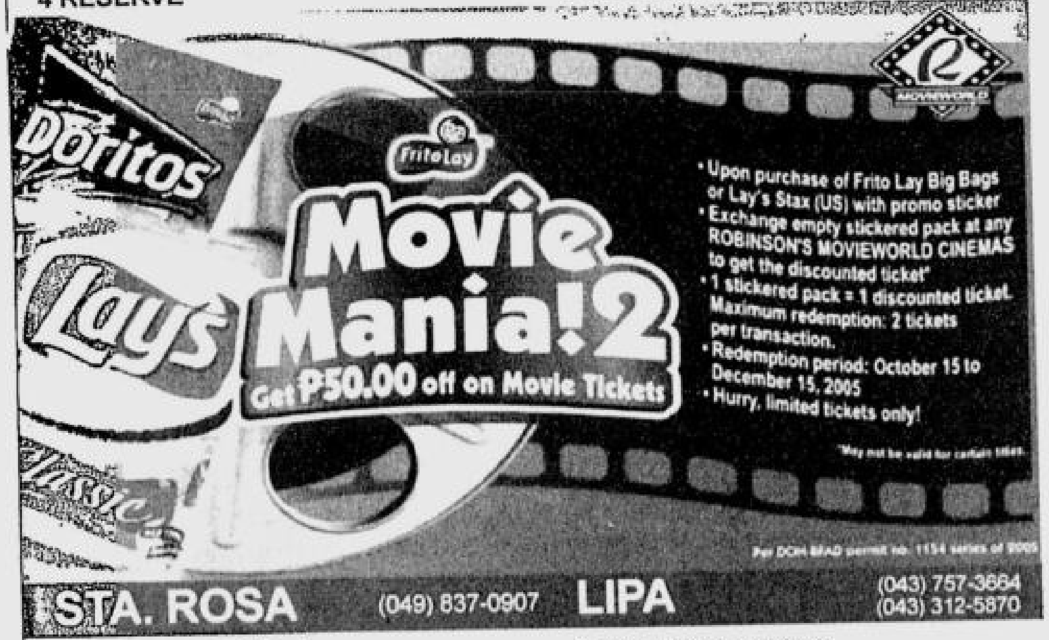

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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

JOEY Reyes

Joey Reyes raps MMFF, Regal

'Why accept *pinakbet* if you ordered *adobo*?'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THIS ISSUE should be addressed with certainty and finality," filmmaker Jose Javier Reyes said, explaining his stand on the latest controversy about next month's Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF).

Reyes' entry this year is "Kutob." His entries in the last two years—"Malikmata" and "Spirit of the Glass"—were among the festival's top moneymakers.

At last week's MMFF launch, Manny Nuqui, president of the Philippine Motion Pictures Producers Association (PMPPA) and film fest executive committee member, pointed out that Regal Films' approved official entry was "Nasaan Ka Nang Kailangan Kita," and not "Blue Moon," which the company is promoting as its bet.

Reyes told INQUIRER Entertainment: "I know that 'Nasaan' was written by Raquel Villavicencio [and] 'Blue Moon' is a Palanca Award-winning script by Allan Tijamo."

His point: "If I submitted a script for approval and then made changes ... it [should] still follow the original story line."

He put it another way: "If the festival were a restaurant and a customer ordered *adobo* and what arrived on the table was *pinakbet*, should he eat it?" He would, he exclaimed, "But the cook should first prove that *okra* and *amplaya* were the new ingredients of *adobo*!"

Reyes turned serious: "The burden of proof here is with the producer; the burden of action is with the festival. What are the rules? What is the point of rules if participants just treat them as suggestions and violate them?"

Frustrated with mainstream cinema, Reyes is placing his bets on the indie scene. "I feel that the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival is more significant than the MMFF," he said. "Cinemalaya allowed the blossoming of new Filipino filmmakers, the future of the industry—and yielded acclaimed films made with meager budgets."

He insisted that the MMFF should welcome more independent producers. "Yes, we need the big studios, but we should also encourage new producers to funnel in money and keep the industry alive. The MMFF should not benefit only a few."

He hollered: "Cinemalaya didn't even have floats." Speaking of which, he is seriously considering not attending the awards night or riding the float for "Kutob," which will run during the holidays (a second batch of entries runs starting Jan. 1).

He'd rather not "validate" the MMFF if the organizers would fail to uphold the rules, he explained. "I'd rather just cook *noche buena*."

RAQUEL Villavicencio

What Mother told Raquel

AWARD-WINNING SCRIPTwriter Raquel Villavicencio said Regal producer Lily Monteverde told her that "Nasaan Ka Nang Kailangan Kita" was "too depressing" for a Christmas presentation.

"Mother Lily didn't produce 'Nasaan' anymore," Villavicencio told INQUIRER Entertainment. Instead, the movie—approved as Regal's entry to the Metro Manila Film Festival—was replaced with "Blue Moon."

"Nasaan" is a story of three homeless youths; "Blue Moon" is light romantic fare.

"I am trying to understand what happened," Villavicencio said. "That's Mother's call. I just hope she makes a lot of money in this film fest so she can produce 'Nasaan' in the future."

Bayani San Diego Jr.

Delightful star moms

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I WASN'T REALLY SHOCKED WHEN Jackie Forster admitted on national TV that she's pregnant again. A free spirit like her always throws caution to the wind when Cupid comes by. Looks like another whirlwind romance for her. What caught my attention was her remark that, since she's not allowed to be with her kids (who are all with their dad Benjie Paras), she might as well have another baby. Although a baby is always a welcome blessing, wouldn't it be better if Jackie made peace first with her other kids before she gives motherhood another shot? How can she be an effective mommy this time around if she has unresolved maternal issues? The pain raging in her heart doesn't go well with the life growing in her womb.

Speaking of motherhood, I had a delightful time as a guest on QTV's "Moms." The show is hosted by Lani Mercado, Sherilyn Reyes and Manilyn Reynes. Their different personalities jell well. Other guests were Isay Alvarez and Jamie Rivera. The three of us shared laughter and tears reminiscing about our beloved moms who had gone ahead. I wrote a letter which I read aloud. Isay composed a poem and Jamie sang. All for the love of our moms. The episode will be aired sometime in December. When it's about moms, nobody can be mum!

Janice de Belen and I enjoyed swapping single mom anecdotes recently. I was struck when she asked, "Where do you draw the line between being a friend and mom to your kids since you're like *barkada* only?" It's quite a balancing act. Knowing when to put your foot down and when to say yes with open arms. For Janice's part, she said, "When my kids start acting up I point to myself and remind them that I'm the mommy." Too bad she also has to keep reminding her ex, John Estrada, that he's the daddy—in her battle for child support.

Just asking

Pinoy Big brother has decided to evict Franzen after committing another violation—exchanging secret messages with Cass. The violation was committed during a commercial break in last Saturday's eviction night where Franzen was mouthing words to Cass and writing down words on the table using his finger. But Cass wants to make a sacrifice to save Franzen. Will her sacrifice carry more weight than the housemates'

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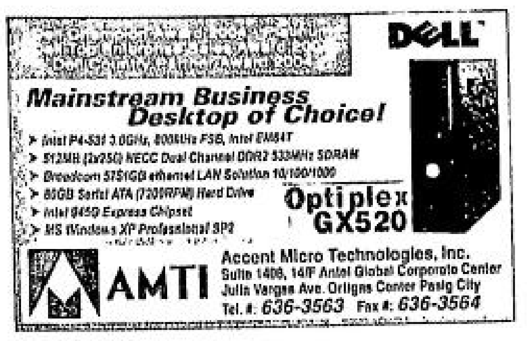
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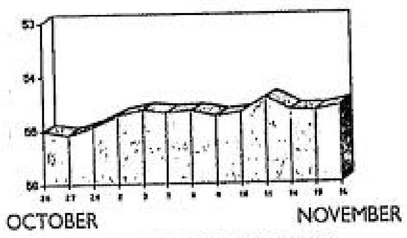

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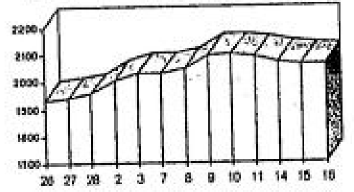


(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close little changed

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 0.14 percent lower on a continuing technical correction after the market hit eight-month highs last week, dealers said.

The downside however was capped by some buying interest in a number of laggard stocks.

The Philippine Stock Exchange compo-

SHARES/ B2

BOP pegged at $2.3B in end-Oct

Surplus marks turnaround from $182-M deficit posted in '04

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S BALANCE of payment (BOP) position recorded a surplus of $2.324 billion in the January-to-October period, marking a turnaround from the $182-million deficit recorded in the same period last year.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the improvement was due to higher inflows from remittances from overseas Filipino workers and some gains from portfolio investments.

BOP is the account of all transactions between one country and the rest of the world, and measures the amount of dollar inflows and outflows.

A surplus means there are more foreign exchange inflows than outflows.

It covers current account, which includes exports and imports, capital account, which includes foreign investments, and foreign currency reserves.

"The cumulative BOP position for the first 10 months showed a hefty surplus of $2.3 billion despite the deficit in the

BOP/ B2

GOOD RATE
MONEY CHANGER

IN THE PINK OF HEALTH
Two men while away the afternoon in front of a money changer in Manila. The BSP said remittances from overseas Filipino workers surged 28 percent in the first nine months of the year to $7.9 billion, keeping the country's dollar holdings in the pink of health. REM ZAMORA

WHAT'S INSIDE

Arroyo quits PSE board /B2

BOI approves perks for P12B worth of projects /B3

Apec urged to go easy on developing nations /B5

Ranks of workers abroad seen to swell by 8% in '05

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NUMBER OF FILIPINO WORKERS deployed for jobs abroad is expected to increase by about 8 percent this year following a 9.6-percent surge in the first half, according to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

The government expects deployment to reach 1,006,496 this year. In 2004, 933,588 workers went abroad.

POEA data show that 541,201 workers were sent overseas from January to June, about 48,000 more than the 493,947 deployed in the first half of 2004.

Of the total, about four-fifths, or 420,759, were land-based workers. Some 264,625 were rehires.

Also, there were 120,242 seafarers deployed in the first half.

Demand for new hires among land-based workers went up by a fifth to 156,107 jobs in the first six months.

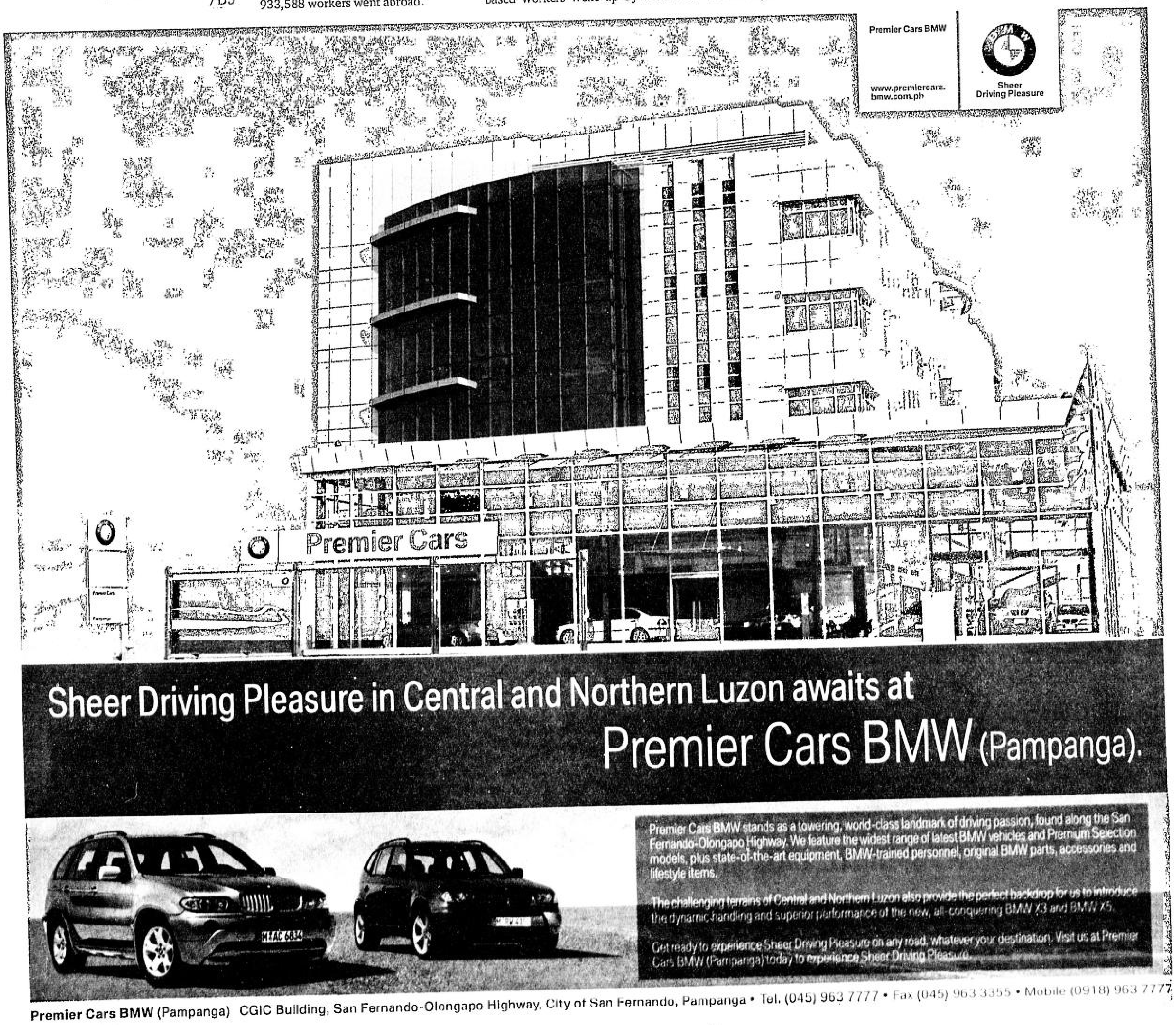
According to labor officials, the increase was due to the quick replenishment of returning overseas Filipino workers by newly hired workers, as well as the continued preference of employers for Filipino workers.

In the first half, hiring of professionals went up 0.35 percent, while demand for service workers jumped by about 40 percent.

For professionals and technical workers, the jobs that opened were for nurses and health care assistants; computer programmers; teachers; chemical, civil, mining and electrical engineers; and professional music composers and singers.

At the same time, service-oriented jobs opened up for domestic helpers, household workers, caretakers, waiters and bartenders, cleaners, and cooks.

RANKS/ B2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Arroyo quits PSE board

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PRESIDENTIAL SISTER-IN-LAW and Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) director Alicia Rita Arroyo, has stepped down from the board of the stock exchange to concentrate on her duties as a Congressman's wife.

Arroyo told INQUIRER in an interview that she filed a copy of her resignation at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) yesterday.

Her resignation comes on the heels of her withdrawal from the board of PCIB Securities.

She added that this has nothing to do with any change in ownership of Equitable PCI Bank after a substantial stake was acquired by the group of mall tycoon Henry Sy, Sr.

Sources told INQUIRER that Government Service Insurance System president and general manager Winston F. Garcia is being considered as the new nominee for PCIB Securities. This, however, could not immediately be confirmed. Garcia did not take the INQUIRER's calls on his mobile phone as of presstime.

ARROYO

"The reforms are already in place. (PSE chair)Jose Vitug and (PSE president) Francis Lim are doing their job," Arroyo said.

She added that she has been actively helping her husband, Negros Occidental Representative Ignacio Arroyo Jr. with health sector-related projects such as feeding malnourished children on Negros Island. By next year, Arroyo said the supplemental feeding program in Negros province aims to feed 120 children.

After an 11-year stint with Yuchengco-led RCBC Securities Inc as its president, Arroyo retired last year from the position saying she was devoting more time to the stock exchange.

Before she was named president of RCBC's affiliated brokerage in 1995, Arroyo was the general manager of RCBC International Finance Ltd., a licensed deposit-taking company in Hong Kong from 1993 to 1995. She was also a director of RCBC Investments Ltd. in Hong Kong during that period.

SMC lends ₱2B to packaging affiliate

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SAN Miguel Corp. lent an additional P2 billion to its affiliate San Miguel Packaging Specialists Inc. (SMPSI) in the third quarter which the latter used to acquire property, plants and equipment.

In line with the cash advances, SMPSI, which was formerly Beverage Packaging Specialists Inc. , has asked the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to approve a plan to increase its capital to P10 billion from P1 billion and change its name to SMPSI.

SMPSI manufactures packaging products for beer, liquor, other beverages and food.

At the end of last year, SMC made advances worth P6.8 billion to SMPSI. By September of this year, SMC's advances already total P8.9 billion.

Of this amount, P2.25 billion will be paid to SMC on the date the cash advances are converted into equity.

In 2003, Development Bank of the Philippines and SMC signed a P900-million loan as part of a P5-billion term loan facility arranged by Citicorp Group. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

SEC opposes Platinum rehabilitation

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE commission (SEC) plans to appeal an order by the Makati Regional Trial Court approving a petition for rehabilitation by troubled pre-need firm Platinum Plans Philippines Inc.

Sources told the INQUIRER that the SEC plans to lodge its appeal with the Court of Appeals after it officially receives the Makati RTC's order.

In an order dated Oct. 14, the Makati Regional Trial Court approved the petition for rehabilitation lodged by Platinum Plans, the second pre-need firm to seek court protection after Yuchencgo-led Pacific Plans Inc.

The order, which was penned by Judge Romeo Barza of Branch 61 of the Makati RTC, stated that Platinum stood a "chance of being restored to a successful operation and solvency if given an opportunity to be rehabilitated under a viable rehabilitation plan".

Platinum has an estimated 37,000 plan holders.

After giving Platinum's rehab petition "due course", the court ordered that the petition, together with comments and oppositions filed by creditors be referred to Platinum's rehabilitation receiver Antonio Tupaz.

Tupaz was ordered to evaluate the rehabilitation plan and submit his recommendation to the court not later than 120 days from Aug. 24.

The court said the SEC filed its opposition, but failed to substantiate its opposition during the summary hearing.

The SEC earlier asked the Makati court to reject Platinum's petition for rehabilitation. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Customers always write

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AS IF IT HAS NOT ENOUGH court cases already, that famous company of the Cheng family, known simply as "Paircargo," got entangled in yet another suit.

For the sake of our hardworking action stars in Congress, "Paircargo" is short for People's Air Cargo and Warehousing Co. Inc.

That's the company of the Chengs, featuring this young guy called Jeffrey who, back in 1996, stole the Naia 3 project from six taipans under the AEDC or the Asian Emerging Dragon Corp.

The owners of the company, through another outfit called "Piatco," subsequently figured prominently in uncountable court cases here and abroad, plus the endless congressional hearings on the Naia 3 project.

Caught in such a mess, the airport terminal has yet to open. It has already been 10 years since Paircargo got the project.

This time, anyway, Paircargo is caught in a legal battle (expected to be protracted, of course) with Australia's flag carrier Qantas.

Paircargo has been providing Qantas with warehousing and cargo handling services. But recently Qantas, as the customer, wanted to break away from Paircargo.

Fearing for their jobs, five executives of Paircargo went to court, alleging that the business decision by the Qantas management was ... well, "unjustified."

Hmmm ....

* * *

LO and behold, the court in Pasay City issued a three-day temporary restraining order to the Bureau of Customs.

The TRO compelled the bureau to stop Qantas from transferring its cargo to a warehouse other than Paircargo's.

In effect, the court told Qantas, albeit indirectly, that the foreign airline company had to keep its business with Paircargo.

That "temporary restraining order" actually was issued last Oct 11. It was supposedly effective for three days.

Lo and behold, on the third day the TRO rose again, and the Pasay City judge extended it by another 15—again "fifteen"—days.

Only in the Philippines!

* * *

INNOCUOUS though the case may seem to us down here in my barangay, in the business community, it earned the usual sneer.

There are three other groups involved in the business of airline cargo handling, aside from Paircargo of the Chengs. These are: Miascor of the Delgado group; Philippine Skylander that was acquired by the group of Buboy Virata; and the country's flag carrier itself, the Philippine Airlines.

The court case, in other words, has a bearing on the other groups. Naturally, they are closely watching the court case.

As it turned out, for instance, Qantas wants to break away from Paircargo and move to the Delgados' Miascor.

Now, the airline business all over the world is seeing bad times with the increase in fuel prices, thanks to the record high oil prices in the world market.

For instance, Air France already dropped out, but not before it lost $15 million in its non-stop Manila-Europe flights in just a few months.

With the expected drop in airline business, they are saying that competition can be expected to heat up in the airline periphery businesses, such as cargo handling.

Thus, the other three groups are busy marketing themselves to the airlines, possibly undercutting each other.

If we believe in the dictum that the customer is always right—since it is the customers who always write the checks—you would expect that Qantas' decision is a normal thing in business, right?

No, it is not so, according to that particular court in Pasay City. And so, the business sector has a little problem.

* * *

LAST year, you see, the same thing happened to another airline, the Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific.

It too decided to drop the services of Paircargo for cargo handling and warehousing.

It too got a TRO from the same court in Pasay City and, up to now, because of the pending court case, Cathay Pacific could not implement its management decision to change its so-called service provider.

HERE is the cherry on the icing of the Paircargo cake: The cases involving Qantas and Cathay Pacific, which were filed several months apart, went to the same judge. Can you believe that?

Just what is the statistical probability of the same case going to the same judge, considering that it is SOP to raffle off the cases among the trial courts.

That may be an interesting study for the Supreme Court.

PBCom returns to profitability

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE BANK OF COMmunications reported a turnaround in its operations for the first nine months, tallying a net income to P75.8 million compared with P177 million in losses in the same period last year on the back of higher net revenues and lower operating expenses.

For the third quarter alone, net income grew to P21.18 million from P13.73 million.

In the nine-month period, net interest income increased by P189.8 million to P927.8 million due to higher net interest earnings and an improvement in returns on earning assets.

Average peso deposit costs have also declined despite the expansion in deposit base, as the bank rode out the decline in benchmark interest rates in the second and third quarters. Funding costs were, likewise, pulled down by the reduction in high-cost deposits.

Non-interest income increased by P138.9 million with trading gains increasing by P108.1 million to P154.4 million. Fees and commissions increased by P10.2 million due to higher service charges collected starting in the second quarter of 2004. Trust income also rose by P13.6 million to P68.7 million due to higher placements in traditional trust products.

Ranks ...

From page B1

Top destinations for OFWs were the Middle East and Asian countries, with demand for Filipino workers going up by 12.5 percent and 14 percent respectively.

Some 193,000 OFWs went to the Middle East and about 155,000 went to the rest of Asia.

In other regions, Europe welcomed some 32,000 OFWs, which meant a decrease of 7.3 percent.

However, the Americas and the Trust Territories called in 6,426 and 4,579 OFWs respectively—an increase of 6.7 percent and 11.5 percent.

For the second half, opportunities continue to open up for OFWs, especially service workers bound for Hong Kong and Singapore, and production workers going to South Korea and Taiwan.

The agency added that the government-to-government hiring program under the Employment Permit System (EPS) of Korea is expected to boost OFW deployment to that country.

BOP pegged at $2.3B in end-Oct

From page B1

month of October," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement. "The surplus was mainly due to double digit growth in OFW remittances, strong portfolio investment inflows, continued growth in merchandise imports, (national government) borrowings, and higher investment income."

The BSP earlier reported that OFW remittances surged 28 percent in October to $7.9 billion due to higher number of deployments.

The government was only originally targeting a 10-percent growth in OFW remittances.

In October alone, the country recorded a BOP deficit of P406 million.

But due to the unexpected high remittances of the past few months, the BSP made a forecast that the full-year figure would actually be at 20 percent.

Shares close little changed

From page B1

site index shed 2.99 points to 2,060.75.

The composite index closed down 2.99 points or 0.14 percent at 2,060.75 after trading between 2,057.42 and 2,066.26. Volume reached 815.97 million shares valued at P1.37 billion, or $19.2 million.

The broader all-shares index retreated 0.99 points to 1,250.78.

Losers outnumbered gainers 40 to 36, while 50 stocks ended unchanged.

The peso averaged at 54.63 to the dollar in midday trade.

Bank of the Philippine Islands led decliners, ending down 50 centavos at P57. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 16, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	33.5	33.5	33	33.5	678,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58	58	56.5	57	495,300
China Banking Corp.	605	605	605	605	2,540
Citystate Savings Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	1,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.6	3,530,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5	280,000
International Exch. Bank	20.75	20.75	20.75	20.75	1,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30.5	29.5	30	618,900
Philippine National Bank	30	30	29	29	117,600
Phil. Savings Bank	33	33	33	33	1,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	13.5	13.5	7,300
Security Bank Corp.	33	34	33	34	385,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	30	30	30	30	400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	24.5	25	24	25	512,600
Manulife Financial Corp.	3025	3025	3025	3025	450
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	152,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	140	140	140	140	1,070
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2030	2060	2030	2060	3,040
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.5	13.5	12.75	12.75	90,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91	1,260,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	705	710	700	705	95,330
Ipeople Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	38,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.048	0.048	15,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.055	0.049	0.055	20,800,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.35	1,251,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1780	1785	1770	1785	102,980
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	76,500,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14.25	14	14.25	20,500
Manila Electric Co. B	21.5	21.75	21.5	21.5	510,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.6	1,986,000
Petron Corp.	4.1	4.35	4.1	4.25	8,183,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.96	0.97	0.96	0.97	320,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	5,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.3	9.4	9.3	9.4	987,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	567,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.6	0.63	0.6	0.63	940,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.65	3.7	3.6	3.6	1,750,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	10,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	480,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	66,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	553,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	8,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	27	27	27	27	26,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	39	39	38	38.5	696,500
Pancake House Inc.	3.3	3.55	3.3	3.4	1,160,000
San Miguel Pure Foods A	55	56	55	56	300
Swift Food Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65	64	65	52,100
San Miguel Corp. B	90	90.5	90	90.5	95,500
Universal Robina Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	39,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	210,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	312.5	312.5	305	307.5	77,960
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	50,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5	5	187,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	3,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.2	1,320,000
APC Group Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	5,420,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.82	0.83	0.82	0.82	490,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	72,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.1	4,380,000
CADP Group Corp.	1	1	1	1	50,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	780,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.45	3.45	3.1	3.1	3,644,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.14	1.18	1.1	1.18	1,163,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	48.5	47	47.5	645,500
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	193,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.75	3.65	3.65	545,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.28	1.32	6,239,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	12,660,000
Paxys Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.7	2,736,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	52,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	150,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	250,000
SM Investments Corp.	248	248	246	246	111,650
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	5,020,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	2,000,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.15	3.95	3.15	3.95	16,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	50,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	400,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	23,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	150,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.99	1	0.99	0.99	14,050,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	300,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.46	463,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,500,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.25	13.5	12.5	12.5	995,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series AA	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	25,000
Far Eastern University	630	630	630	630	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.4	9.4	9.2	9.3	4,530,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	3,040,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.44	0.44	4,390,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	3,431,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	4,820,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	610,000
SM Development Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	4,242,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	80,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	14,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	141,000
Benguet Corp. A	8	8	8	8	5,000
Benguet Corp. B	35	35	35	35	1,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	930,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	4,240,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	23,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.027	0.027	406,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	82,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.16	1,657,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.34	1.38	1.34	1.34	1,891,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26	25	25	481,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	18,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.8	44,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	7,910,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	30,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc.	16,839,200	714,826,220.00
Comm'l & Ind'l.	204,063,320	549,664,130.00
PRO	25,383,000	86,649,540.00
Mining	537,086,000	31,115,430.00
OIL	30,984,000	1,479,750.00
GRAND TOTALS :	814,355,520	1,383,735,070.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	601.99	DOWN 3.07
Comm'l & Ind'l	3,217.77	UP 2.68
PRO	812.03	DOWN 2.95
Mining	2,607.61	DOWN 31.67
OIL	3.03	UP 0.08
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,250.78	DOWN 0.99
Composite	2,060.75	DOWN 2.99

NO. OF ADVANCES: 36; NO. OF DECLINES: 40; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 126; NO. OF TRADES. 3,297

CURRENCIES

November 16, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.853097	1.000000	54.6770
Japan	Yen	0.007177	0.008413	0.4600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480379	1.735300	94.8810
Hongkong	Dollar	0.109997	0.128939	7.0500
Switzerland	Franc	0.648004	0.759590	41.5321
Canada	Dollar	0.715385	0.838574	45.8507
Singapore	Dollar	0.501350	0.587682	32.1327
Australia	Dollar	0.624705	0.732279	40.0388
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.264598	2.654562	145.1435
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.227487	0.266660	14.5802
Brunei	Dollar	0.499881	0.585960	32.0385
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000100	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020726	0.024295	1.3284
UAE	Dirham	0.232274	0.272272	14.8870
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.172200	64.0924
Argentina	Peso	0.288452	0.338123	18.4876
Brazil	Real	0.387243	0.453926	24.8193
Denmark	Kroner	0.134097	0.157188	8.5946
India	Rupee	0.018704	0.021925	1.1988
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.225717	0.264585	14.4667
Mexico	New Peso	0.080178	0.093985	5.1388
New Zealand	Dollar	0.584033	0.684603	37.4320
Norway	Kroner	0.127960	0.149995	8.2013
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014289	0.016750	0.9158
South Africa	Rand	0.125831	0.147499	8.0648
Korea	Won	0.000824	0.000966	0.0528
Sweden	Kroner	0.103819	0.121697	6.6540
Syria	Pound	0.016434	0.019264	1.0533
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025491	0.029880	1.6337
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000398	0.000466	0.0255

BOI approves perks for ₱12B worth of projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS HAS APproved tax perks for 30 projects worth P12 billion under its "one-day" project evaluation process.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, who is also BOI Chair, said the agency's Simplified Registration Procedure was gaining ground in reducing the cost of doing business in the country.

Favila said the 30 projects were evaluated in the first month of SRP's implementation, from Oct. 7 to Nov. 7.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez, who is also BOI managing head, said that under the SRP, the entire process from evaluation to issuance of registration papers is completed within three working days for the "straightforward projects," while it took 10 working days for projects which require the BOI's exercise of discretion on specific issues.

Among the big ticket projects that were approved were Asahi Glass Philippines' P1.54-billion float glass project which would modernize and expand its existing furnace; Mindanao Silicon Metal Corp.'s P87-million project that would produce high grade silicon metal; Digital Media Exchange's P144-million IT project; and Lane Archive Technologies Corp.'s P130-million files management project.

The officials said the projects were expected to provide jobs for 5,000 workers.

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These FREE informal briefings will be held on the following dates and times at Suite 1206, 12th Floor MCS Tower, Makati Cinema Square, Don Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo), Makati City:

- Thursday, November 17 at 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday, November 19 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Interested business people or senior managers must be pre-qualified by phone prior to attending, and must meet both the following minimum requirements:

- PERSONAL NET WORTH OF US$ 300,000; AND
- AT LEAST TWO (2) YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL SENIOR MANAGEMENT OR BUSINESS OWNERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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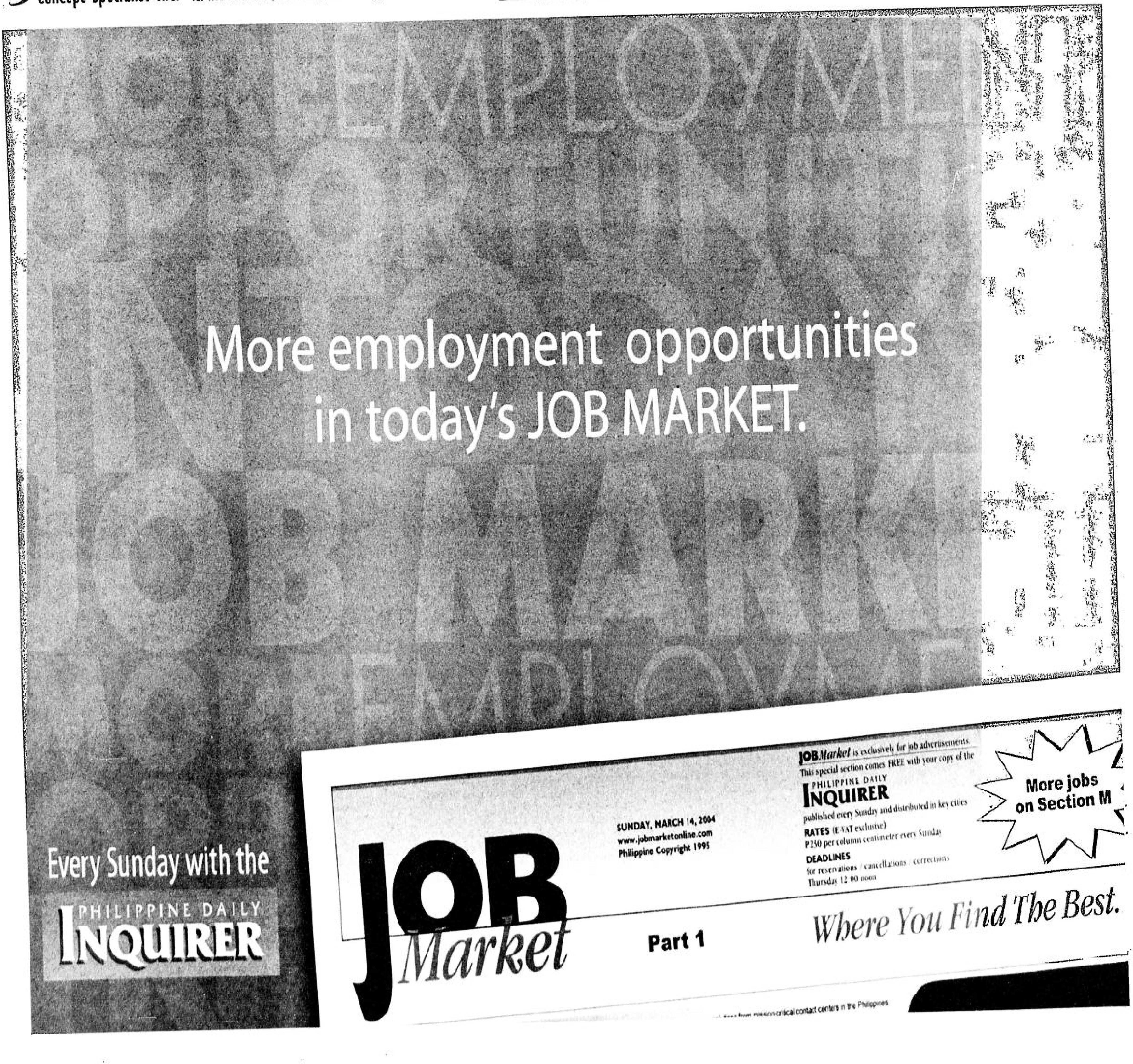

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Israeli Filmfest at SM Cinema

FILM ENTHUSIASTS WILL HAVE THE rare opportunity to view some of the best contemporary Israeli films as the 6th Israeli Film Festival unreels at The Podium on Nov. 11 and at the SM Megamall on Nov. 17, 18 and 19.

The film festival is a joint undertaking of The Podium, Smart Communications and the SM Cinemas.

Leading the line-up of films is the critically acclaimed Nina's Tragedies, a story of 14 year old Nadav's coming of age. It depicts six turbulent months, made all the more complicated by his attraction to his beautiful yet emotionally fragile Aunt Nina. The film unfolds through a series of funny and touching journal entries in which Nadav reminisces about this chaotic period in his family's history.

Nina's Tragedies has been awarded 11 Israeli Academy prizes, including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Screenplay. It also won the Best Film and Best Screenplay awards at the Jerusalem International Film Festival.

Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi, on the other hand, is a heartwarming family comedy and surprising love story, which focuses on the captivating character of one boy blessed with extraordinary cooking talents who discovers himself and the power of love. It topbills an all-star cast of highly acclaimed Israeli actors and actresses - Oshri Cohen, Arie Elias and Esti Zakheim.

Operation Thunderbolt is another must-see film. Set in the 1970s, the film recalls a true story about a group of Israeli commandos rescuing 104 civilians held by terrorists. Highlighting the themes of duty and service, politics and ordinary lives, the film is a dramatic recreation of the daring raid on Entebbe to rescue the passengers of a hijacked plane. The film was produced and filmed with the cooperation of the Israeli government and the military.

Turn Left at the End of the World is set in a tiny isolated Israeli village where two Jewish immigrant families become unlikely neighbors. Forced by circumstances to live together, the two wary communities attempt to build a sense of identity.

Each family has a teenage daughter who is negotiating the landscape of the sexual revolution. When the sultry Moroccan Nicole and the heady Indian Sara become friends, their youth and desire for freedom help them overcome prejudices. In this isolated place, the road to harmony twists joyfully and surprisingly.

The film festival will also show some G and PG 13 short student films from the Camera Obscure School of Art. Some of the films include America, Audition, Poisoned, Pure Soup, the Parlor, and Jabberwocky. The Sam Spiegel Film and Television Institute in Israel, on the other hand, will also showcase Yonder, Seldat, Contrapunkt, and This Aint San Francisco.

The 6th Israeli Film Festival is one of the many exciting events at The Podium and SM Cinema.

HICKOK
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HICKOK TAPS BRAD TURVEY

Brad Turvey (center) has been tapped by Quality House as official endorser of Hickok belt and other leather accessories. Quality House and its advertising agency Ad Options Unlimited, recognize Brad's edge in product endorsement. Both firms believe the high quality and trendy styles of Hickok and Brad's classy image complement each other.

CDO RECOGNIZED BY CUP

Renato Hernandez and Jonathan Bendicion, assistant vice-president and senior marketing manager respectively of CDO-Foodsphere Inc beam after receiving the Annual National Consumers Awards from officials of the Consumers Union of the Philippines (CUP) at ceremonies held recently at the Westin Philippine Plaza. The consumer advocacy group cited the meat processing firm as the most outstanding Karne Norte manufacturer in the country for the years 2004 and 2005. CDO was also named Hall of Fame Awardee in 2003 by the CUP for consistently delivering consumer-friendly products as manifested by its accolade as the most outstanding meat processing company for 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Floorstation's Wilsonart covers Kipling's Bar in Mandarin Oriental Manila

SOMETHING DELIGHTFUL HAS HAPpened at Kipling's Bar in Mandarin Oriental Manila. The favorite lounge and single-malt specialty bar for lovers of whiskey, cigars, excellent tapas and drinks has gone through a slight transformation in the last two weeks. While the cozy atmosphere has been retained, the food and drinks unchanged, the charmed guests and frequent patrons have all been floored with sheer delight.

Yes, the floors have been changed. Stripped of its old scratched, damaged, natural hardwood flooring planks, Kipling's now boasts of being a showcase display of the new Wilsonart laminate flooring with aluminum oxide coating, also known as liquid sandpaper. The owners have selected the Red Label Figured Mahogany which looks like dark-stained Philippine Mahogany. The look and elegance of real wood is attained without the usual attendant problems that go with it.

Brought in by the Floorstation Group, the largest flooring distributor in California and proudly Filipino-owned (Jun Alejo - US# (818)395-1479 or RP# (915)444-7809), this new supplier in Manila promises to show home and store owners, architects, developers and interior designers, the best and the latest in floor coverings. Now being specified by the leaders in the design industry, Floorstation presents four new product collections: Anderson Hardwood Floor, Wilsonart Laminate Floor, Pacific Rim Bamboo Floor and Armstrong Laminate Floor.

Teams of installers were trained by an American Installation expert, highlighting techniques to ensure quality of work. With such an excellent surface, the regular habitués of Kiplings will join the legions of satisfied customers served by Floorstation, Inc.

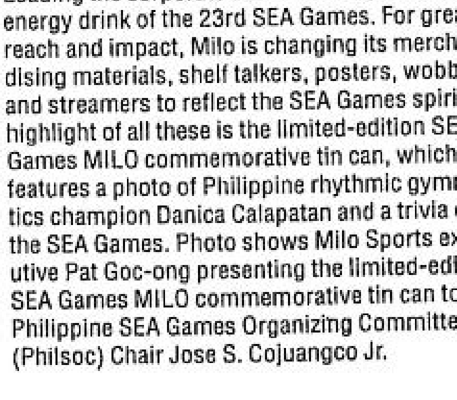
For inquiries visit our showroom at 608 Sierra Madre St. 2nd Floor Race Building, Mandaluyong City, Philippines. You may also contact architect Louie Luistro at (632) 531-8373 or (917) 806-9475. Or you may always shop on-line at www.floorstation.com.

SANYO PRODUCT LAUNCH

Sanyo Philippines recently held a product launch for its new models. Shown are Marlon Balobalo, technical manager of Sanyo Phils (center) demonstrating the proper use of the Sanyo industrial floor polisher as hosts Maan Bayot and Edu Manzano together with Sanyo national sales manager Joseph Chua look on.

MILO SUPPORTS 23RD SEA GAMES

The remarkable ability of sports as a unifying force is being proven yet again as various sectors of society work together for the much-anticipated staging of the 23rd South East Asian (SEA) Games from Nov. 27 through Dec. 5. Leading the corporate sector is Milo, the official energy drink of the 23rd SEA Games. For greater reach and impact, Milo is changing its merchandising materials, shelf talkers, posters, wobblers and streamers to reflect the SEA Games spirit. A highlight of all these is the limited-edition SEA Games MILO commemorative tin can, which features a photo of Philippine rhythmic gymnastics champion Danica Calapatan and a trivia on the SEA Games. Photo shows Milo Sports executive Pat Goc-ong presenting the limited-edition SEA Games MILO commemorative tin can to Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee (Philsoc) Chair Jose S. Cojuangco Jr.



NESVITA PRO-DIGESTION PARTNERS WITH PLANET SPORTS

Inspiring women to look and feel good, Nesvita Pro-Digestion teams up with Planet Sports through a partnership made formal by Publicis-Manila account director for Nesvita, Cecille Reyes and Planet Sports general manager, Ronnie Colmenar. With a regular work-out and consistent intake of Nesvita Pro-Digestion, active wear from brands like Puma, Arena and New Balance from Planet Sports would fit them perfectly. Visit any of the Planet Sports outlets in Glorietta, Festival Mall, Rockwell Powerplant, Pasig, Ayala Center Cebu, Robinsons Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Iloilo, Legaspi, Los Baños, Naga, Pampanga and Tarlac to be extra fab and exceptionally healthy.

BITS Clips

M&M's Xmas promo

MASTERFOODS PHILS INC LAUNCHED A TEXT promo dubbed as M & M's Jazz Up Your Christmas Promo wherein 3 Honda Jazz Cars will be given away. It will run till Dec. 31. Just buy specially marked packs of M&M's Chocolate: Milk, Peanut, Crispy and Minis with an M&M's Jazz Up Your Christmas sticker from participating establishments and you will see that each pack will have a unique alphanumeric raffle code printed on it. To join the promo, just text MMJAZZ raffle code/name/complete address/Age to 2219 for Globe, Touch Mobile and Sun Cellular Subscribers and 638 for Smart, Addict Mobile and Talk n' Text Subscribers. P2.50 will be charged per text message sent. Example: MMJAZZ A1234/Ann Garcia/8 Mango St. Project 4, Quezon City/18. For succeeding entries, just type MMJAZZ Raffle code Example: MMJAZZ B5678. M&M's packs with the Jazz Up Your Christmas stickers must be kept and shall be presented for verification purposes in order to claim the prize. Weekly draws will be held every monday and the grand draw will be on Jan. 9, 2006. See posters, flyers and print ads for details.

EQ Diaper New Year promo

JUST RECENTLY, EQ DIAPERS LAUNCHED THE very first text-based promo in the diaper category dubbed "Text-Panalo, New Year Pa-Premyo" with over 1 Million in cash to be given away. To join, consumers just need to buy a pack of EQ Basic, Colors or EQ Dry of any variant or size, keep the tape receipt and take note of the receipt's serial or transaction number. Then, they are to text EQPROMO REG plus the receipt's serial or transaction number, name, address, store where EQ was purchased, date of purchase to 2955 to get an instant raffle entry. Ex. EQPROMO REG 0001129/SM/SEPT 25/PAOLO GAMBOA/88 SHAW BLVD, MANDALUYONG. It is important to note that there should only be one registered name per cell phone number. There will be 3 monthly raffle draws where huge cash prizes will be given away and one lucky winner will be awarded 500,000 cash in the grand draw slated for Jan 6. For more details, text EQPROMO to 2955 or refer to posters, flyers and print ads. The promo will run till Jan. 6, 2006.

UP Law homecoming '05

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES' LAW ALUMni Association gears up for its annual grand alumni homecoming night on Nov. 18, 6 p.m. at the NBC Tent in Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. With the theme "A Celebration of Life and Friendship," the event is hosted by this year's silver jubilarians, the UP Law '80 Foundation. UP Law '80 Foundation president lawyer Raoul Angangco said the alumni homecoming gathers together the distinguished members of the different batches into one momentous and memorable evening of reminiscing their camaraderie and fellowship. "The event promises to be a gathering of the most prominent legal eagles of our times," Angangco said. Buffet dinner will be served, with free drinks courtesy of Asia Brewery. There will be no corkage fees for those who may wish to bring their own drinks. Live entertainment will be provided by the Sabor Latino Band for a night of music and dancing. For ticket inquiries, call Dang Teves at 818-9836, Helen Bengil at 897-2136, or the assigned class representatives.

Rockwell Jewellery Show

BUYERS OF THE BEST OF Philippine fine jewelry are invited by the Guild of Philippine Jewellers to the Rockwell Jewellery Show from Nov. 18 to 20, at the Power Plant Mall. GPJ president Ma. Luisa Diokno Unson says 18 of the country's leading fine jewelry makers are joining the event which showcases the best of gold, silver and pearl jewelry. The GPJ's booth system was designed by Tessa Prieto-Valdes. For inquiries, call 728-1722, 728-1726, or email gpjewels@globlines.com.ph or visit www.guildofphilippinejewellersinc.com.

Join South Forbes Investors' Night

ENTREPRENEURS, INVESTORS, AND HOMEBUyers are welcome to join the South Forbes Golf City Investors' Night on Nov. 22. To be held at 6 p.m. at the NBC Tent in Bonifacio Global City, the Investors' Night will also see the launch of three new prestige projects in the country's first fully integrated, world-class golf resort city. The first, Esplanade, which features commercial units at the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors, ushers in a new, convenient lifestyle in Metro Sta. Rosa. The second, Golf View Terraces, gives unit owners magnificent views of the perfectly manicured fairways of the 18-hole South Forbes Golf Club as well as Laguna de Bay and Mt. Makiling. The third, Tokyo Mansions, will be the country's very first Japanese-themed community; the architecture and design of which evoke a Modern Zen appeal. For this grand occasion, interested investors will be treated to "A Night under the Stars." To get your invitation to the South Forbes Investors' Night, simply call (02)635-8108 or (02)636-4647.

Unilab's Men's Health Unit

IN RESPONSE TO PRESSING HEALTH CONCERNS of the Filipino male population, pharmaceutical leader United Laboratories Inc (Unilab), makers of trusted healthcare brands, recently launched its Men's Health unit under subsidiary Biomedis Inc. This new program is specifically designed to improve the landscape of men's health in the country. Men's Health offers a portfolio of safe, effective and affordable healthcare products and medicines for the diseases and conditions of Filipino men, both young and old. It aims to forge a strong and enduring partnership with medical practitioners in providing superior healthcare for Filipino men for them to experience full enjoyment of life. It also aims to build awareness among doctors and patients on men's health issues such as low erection quality (LEQ). Within five years time, Men's Health hopes to be a respected, world-class Unilab subsidiary in itself, distinguished for its innovation and commitment in addressing men's health issues. Men's Health is consistent with Unilab's commitment to remain relevant in the markets where it is present. It operates under the same philosophy of pharmacoeconomics which has, through these years, guided Unilab in providing safe, effective and affordable medicines to millions of Filipino families.

PUYAT STEEL RECEIVES ANCA AWARD

For four consecutive years, Puyat Steel Corp (PSC), the pioneer in the galvanizing industry, has been the recipient of the Consumers Union of the Philippines (CUP) award as the Outstanding Manufacturer of Pre-painted and Galvanized Iron Sheets and Coils (PPGI). This prestigious award is a testament to the company's high quality products Apo Galfan/GI sheets manufactured in its ISO-certified plant. Photo shows the officers of Puyat Steel Corp with the Rajah Soliman statuette symbolizing the award: (from left) Puyat Steel marketing officer Suzette Relucio, sales manager James Mejilla, VP and general manager Salvio Perez, VP for manufacturing Virginia Arceo, sales manager Opie Nioko and senior marketing specialist Pia Lamoste.

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Pharmalink Asia, the trusted pharmaceutical and healthcare marketing specialist, appoints AsianLife and General Assurance Corp (AsianLife & General) as its insurer in providing medical insurance benefits for its employees and their dependents and Accette as its insurance consultant. Shown in photo are (from left): AsianLife & General senior manager Concepcion Roble, Accette vice president Corine Moralda, AsianLife & General EVP Bobby Alfonso and president and CEO Eulogio Mendoza, Pharmalink Asia president Tito Tolentino, Accette president Augusto Toledo II and Pharmalink Asia comptroller Nilo Badiola.

LIFESTYLE NETWORK ON THAI AIRWAYS

Lifestyle Network recently went to Bangkok, Thailand to cover popular shopping areas, well-known hotels, restaurants and bars for their new project, 'Good Finds'. Shown at the Thai Airways Check-In Counter before their flight are: (from left) Boc Deveraturda, Glenn Infante, Francis Partible, Stephanie Benedicto (Lifestyle Network manager), JP Aquino (producer), Emily Barcelon (senior marketing manager, ABS-CBN), Malu Dueñas (Thai Airways), Camille Javier (executive producer), Zachi de Leon (project coordinator, ABS-CBN), and Dave de Jesus (Tourism Authority of Thailand). Thai Airways flies from Manila 11 times weekly to Bangkok.

PNOC-EDC to invest ₱1.6M in promoting biofuels

By Abigail L. Ho

IN AN EFFORT TO FURTHER DEVELOP and promote alternative fuels, the Philippine National Oil Co. Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) has earmarked P1.6 million for a project that will promote diesel substitutes.

The Jatropha Propagation Project, to be undertaken in cooperation with the Dacongcogon Producers Cooperative Marketing Association (DPCMA) and D1 Oils Asia Pacific Inc. through a recently signed memorandum of agreement, involves planting the Jatropha curcas plant, a possible biofuel feedstock.

In a statement issued yesterday, the state firm said the plant's 37-percent oil content could be used as a substitute for diesel fuel.

Initially, the Jatropha plant, or *tuba-tuba* in Filipino, will be planted on a five-hectare parcel of land in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental.

The project aimed to determine the agronomic requirements of the Jatropha species in Philippine conditions, PNOC-EDC president and chief executive Paul Aquino said.

Found in abundance in India, Jatropha curcas is already being used there for biodiesel.

According to the official website of India's Center for Jatropha Promotion, the plant is drought-resistant and can grow well even in poor soil. It also grows relatively quickly and lives for 50 years, all that time producing seeds.

The Jatropha plant's seeds have an oil content of 37 percent, which can be combusted as a fuel even without being refined. This oil has already passed tests performed on diesel engines.

Aquino said PNOC-EDC was very much interested in supporting the Jatropha project as it could provide carbon dioxide-neutral fuel in rural areas, reduce pollution in the atmosphere and help in upgrading wasteland areas.

Also, he said the project could help boost countryside development by providing livelihood to rural communities through PNOC-EDC's corporate social responsibility program.

DPCMA is a Negros Occidental-based agricultural cooperative that operates a sugar mill in Kabankalan City and supplies sugarcane to other sugar mills in the province.

Registered with the Cooperative Development Authority, it currently has 9,614 active farmer-members.

D1 Oils Asia Pacific Inc., on the other hand, is a subsidiary of United Kingdoms-based D1 Oils Plc.

Its parent firm, with a commitment to reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources, has already developed advanced refining technology and agronomy techniques for biodiesel.

Apec urged to go easy on developing nations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FAVILA

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation to look beyond the mere removal of trade barriers and consider the "defensive interests" of developing countries.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, who is attending the Apec Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Busan, South Korea, said in a statement that he has urged the members to adopt a more holistic definition of "successful outcomes" to address the needs of developing economies.

The AMM is being held days before a summit that will gather the leaders of 23 member economies on Friday and Saturday.

Favila said the ministers had been drafting an Apec leaders' statement on the Doha Development Round of negotiations at the World Trade Organization, which in turn would hold in a ministerial conference in Hong Kong this December.

Apec members include Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United States and Vietnam.

"I asked Apec to consider that ambitious liberalization may be good, but just as important as the degree of ambition is a balanced outcome," Favila said.

He explained that a balanced outcome should include not only tariff reduction and the elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade, but should also cover exporting and safeguard interests of developing countries in agriculture, Non-Agricultural Market Access (Nama) issues, trade in services, rules and development issues.

"(These interests) cannot be served by the relentless, indiscriminate application of conventional prescriptions or tariff reduction alone, but by and large would also require a genuine respect of the unique characteristics of each economy," Favila said.

Observers say the WTO negotiations are hanging by a thread because major players cannot agree on what degree of reduction members should apply to tariffs, domestic support and export subsidies particularly in the area of trade on agricultural goods.

Further, WTO members consider a resolution of issues in agriculture would be key for progress on other matters such as Nama, services, rules and others.

"We hope that the powerful economies of the world would also think of how to help small players to improve their supply and quality capabilities," Favila said. "Otherwise, we may find that all the market access we gain at the WTO is meaningless for small economies who cannot take advantage of these hard-won concessions."

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Concom in Mindanao

(First of three parts)

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

I WAS IN DAVAO LAST WEEK FOR THE REgional consultation of the Consultative Commission (ConCom) together with ten other commissioners: Writer Carmen Pedrosa, former Sen. Vicente Paterno, former member of Congress and Indigenous People's Representative Ronald Adamat, Philippine Star Columnist Jarius Bondoc, Federalist Advocate Rey Teves, ConCom Secretary Geneneral Lito Lorenzana, Assumption School of Manila President Sr. Luz Soriano, MSU President and Peace Panel member Emily Marohombsar, former Vice Mayor of Baguio and NGO Rep. Betty Tabanda and media personality Gil Abarico.

All 50 of us members were in Cebu for the grand launching of the Visayas and Mindanao regional consultations last Oct. 24. The Cebu consultation was attended by over 1,000 participants. We were divided into three teams so that we could conduct the consultations simultaneously in key areas of both Vis-Min.

From Cebu, our team went to Iloilo where we were warmly welcomed by Mayor Treñas, Congresswoman Sally Zaldivar and Congressman Tupas. From this bustling Visayas center, we flew to Davao City.

It's good to be home and we were met at the airport by Vice Mayor Louie Bonguyan, Deputy Presidential Assistant for Mindanao-DPA Leyretana and Councilors Mabel Acosta and Jess Zozobrado.

Participants from the southern part of Mindanao—South Cotabato, Gen.Santos, Sarrangani, Central Mindanao, ARMM-Maguindanao Region converged in this city for the consultation.

The afternoon started with ConCom Secretary General Lorenzana explaining Executive Order 453 that led to the creation of the ConCom.

It was emphasized that the ConCom's mandate was simply to recommend revisions to the 1987 Constitution and will focus on the following: Shift of form of government from presidential to parliamentary; unitary to federal structure; national patrimony and economic reforms.

The ConCom will not rewrite the constitution, but will merely recommend revisions based on the mandate as stated in the EO.

The recommendations which will incorporate the results of the nationwide consultation will be submitted to the President on Dec. 15, 2005. Parallel dialogues have also been made with the leaders of Congress and LGUs and the ConCom.

All of the nationwide consultations will have these three workshops: Form of government (shift from the presidential to parliamentary); structure of the republic (unitary or federal) and national patrimony and economic reforms.

The workshops in the Davao ConCom were very revealing.

One realization is that the people in this part of Mindanao have a very clear understanding of how a parliamentary form of government operates and the benefits that they will derived from such a shift.

There was a unanimous, overwhelming desire to bring about the change NOW.

They resisted the idea of having a transition period of 10 years. I can feel that the people here had given up hope on the current presidential system.

Issues such as revenue sharing, state laws, composition of states, eligibility of officials under the federal system were talked about extensively. The majority of the participants favored constitutional convention rather than a constitutional assembly.

I joined Commissioner Paterno in the workshop on National Patrimony and Economic Reforms and the results really surprised me.

The majority of the representatives of various groups resisted the "full liberalization" policy in land, media, public utilities, advertising and educational institution ownership; use and exploitation of natural resources. They want to retain the present provision of 60 percent Filipino and 40 percent foreign ownership in the capital requirements in the development of natural resources; and 100 percent Filipino ownership of private agricultural lands; and 60 percent Filipino and 40 percent foreign ownership for industrial and commercial lands.

They, however, advocated for a larger foreign ownership at 40 percent for mass media, public utilities and advertising and for special technical schools.

I tried playing the devil's advocate by explaining to them that in the current light of globalization and liberalization, we might just lag behind if we close our doors to larger foreign participation in the economy—since obviously these would bring more capital, more money, better technology, jobs and investments.

But this did not help at all.

(Joji Ilagan-Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; chair of the Mindanao TVET; Mindanao Rep, Export Development Council; chair, Joji Ilagan Foundation; former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

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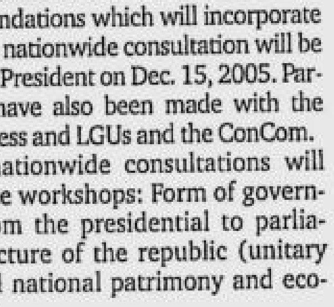

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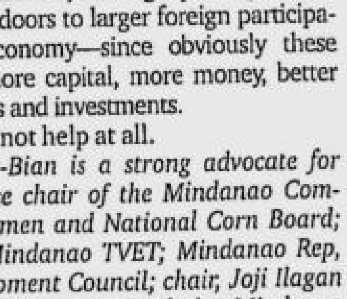

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Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation

Section I. Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Three Phase Test Equipment
(Reference No.: PB050909-EL0089)

1. The *National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the CY2005 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board intends to apply the sum of PHP 14,000,000.00* being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of Three Phase Test Equipment.** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The TRANSCO-HO now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for *Supply and Delivery of 3 Phase Test Equipment.* Delivery of the GOODS is required as listed below. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders, starting November 10, 2005 to December 9, 2005 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00).* The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on November 30, 2005 at 2:00 P.M. at same address below.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 P.M. of December 12, 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form and amount:

Form of Security	Amount
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	Php 140,000.00
2. Bank guarantee (1.5% of ABC)	Php 210,000.00
3. Surety bond (2.5% of ABC)	Php 350,000.00
4. Foreign government guarantee (100% of ABC)	Php 14,000,000.00

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on December 12, 2005 / 2:00 P.M. at the *Admin Conference Room same address below.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road,
Diliman, Quezon City.
Tel. No. (632) 9812235 / Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – November 10 & 17, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Privatization and Management Office ("PMO"), through its Bids and Awards Committee ("PMO-BAC"), intends to procure the services of a financial advisor ("FA") in connection with the privatization of the interests of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines ("GRP") in **Radio Philippines Network, Inc. ("RPN-9") and Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation ("IBC-13")** under a success fee arrangement.

   The Approved Budget for the Contract ("ABC") is Six Million Pesos (P6,000,000.00), to be paid by the PMO and chargeable against the success fee which shall not exceed one a half percent (1.5%) of the total cash proceeds due the GRP from each privatization of GRP's interests in RPN-9 and IBC-13.

   The fees for the FA shall be payable as follows:

PHASE	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	FEES
I – Valuation	Preparation of valuation and appraisal report, information memorandum and privatization plan	Not to exceed Six Million Pesos (P6,000,000.00)
II – Implementation	Implementation of the privatization plan, as approved by the Privatization Council	Not to exceed 1.5% of the total cash proceeds due GRP, less the fee paid for the Valuation Phase

2. The PMO now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent ("LOIs") from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for Financial Advisory Services. Interested FAs must submit their LOIs on or before 30 November 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. by hand, to the address below and secure the Eligibility Documents and Shortlisting Requirements therefrom for a minimal fee of P1,000.00.

   Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents and Short Listing Requirements shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents on 2 December 2005; 9:30 a.m. at the 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Only those found eligible shall be considered for short listing and only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.

3. The PMO-BAC shall draw up the short list of FAs from those who have submitted LOIs and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 ("RA 9184") and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A ("IRR-A"). The short list of prospective bidders shall consist of seven (7) FAs. The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

   a. 40% – General experience of the FA, considering both the overall experience of the firm and the individual experience of the principal and key staff, including relevant experience of the principal and key staff from previous employment;
   b. 20% – Privatization experience of the FA;
   c. 20% – Qualifications of personnel who may be assigned to the project;
   d. 10% – Current workload of personnel who may be assigned to the project; and
   e. 10% – Dealings of the FA with the GRP.

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of RA 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of RA 9184, only bids from shortlisted FAs will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents to be obtained from the PMO. In accordance with the IRR-A of RA 9184, the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The PMO-BAC shall evaluate bids using the ***Quality-Cost Based Evaluation*** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders to be obtained from the PMO.

5. Interested FAs may obtain the eligibility and short listing requirements, and the other bidding documents, from the PMO-BAC at the address given below from Mondays to Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The deadline for submission of bids from the shortlisted FAs shall be on 21 December 2005, 9:30 a.m.

6. The PMO/PMO-BAC reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
4th Floor, 104 Gamboa Street
Legaspi Village, Makati City
Tel. Nos.: 893-1640 / 893-7096 / 817-1103 / 892-2145
Fax No.: 893-2290
Website : www.pmo.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **CRISANTA S. LEGASPI**
Chairperson, PMO-BAC

(PDI-Nov. 17 & 24, 2005)

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Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-334	1 lot Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Applicable Labor and Materials of Two (2) units - 400 KVA, Three-Phase 0.8 P.F., 1800 RPM, 240 VAC Brand New Diesel Generating Units at LANDBANK-West Avenue Branch and Back-Up Offices.	P 6,720,000.00	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding for the above requirements are scheduled on December 7, 2005 at 1:00 PM and pertinent Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, upon **payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **November 25, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI–Nov. 17 & 24, 2005)

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MANDALUYONG

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PASIG

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1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% w/out taking car 5315577

1% w/out taking car 7262780

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/o taking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o taking car 7723810/12

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

The **GSIS ACQUIRED ASSETS EVALUATION COMMITTEE (AAEC)** shall conduct a Public Auction for the sale of the following residential/subdivision housing units/acquired properties on **DECEMBER 16, 2005**, at the HRDD Lobby, 3rd Flr., Core "G", GSIS Headquarters Building, Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City.

AMANDAVILLE SUBD.
San Rafael, Bulacan

Prop No.	Blk	Lot	LOT Area (sqm)	HOUSE Flr. Area (sqm)	Minimum Offer Price (Php)
1	1	9B	67	30	387,410
2	1	12C	67	30	412,198
3	1	12B	67	30	418,325
4	1	14B	67	30	414,240
5	1	15B	143	36	714,963
6	1	22A	75	30	452,453
7	1	22B	75	30	447,348
8	1	32A	75	30	448,368
9	1	32B	75	30	438,155
10	1	33B	74	30	458,586
11	2	1	171	36	826,443
12	2	7A&B	140	36	726,688
13	3	2A	120	30	638,139
14	3	9	138	36	691,668
15	4	4A	75	30	442,240
16	4	4B	75	30	454,495
17	4	7A	75	30	432,640
18	5	3A	137	36	690,286
19	5	5A	75	30	448,368
20	5	6A	75	30	447,346
21	5	11	150	36	725,982
22	5	13B	75	30	446,325
23	5	15A	75	30	444,283
24	6	5A	75	30	450,410
25	6	7B	75	30	446 325
26	6	11	150	36	804,414
27	6	17A	75	30	448,368
28	6	17B	75	30	427,943
29	6	19	169	36	783,904
30	7	1	144	36	711,110
31	7	3A	75	30	455,716
32	7	5B	75	30	446,325
33	7	7	150	36	755,394
34	7	10	150	36	724,757
35	7	12A	75	30	419 773
36	7	13A	75	30	422,838
37	7	14A	75	30	447,346
38	7	14B	75	30	438,113
39	7	15B	75	30	444,283
40	7	17A	75	30	474,920
41	7	17B	75	30	465,729
42	7	18A	75	30	443,261
43	7	19	172	36	805,433
44	7	20	173	36	824,805
45	8	2A	137	36	692,250
46	8	3A	75	30	452,531
47	8	3B	75	30	449,348
48	8	4A	75	30	453,593
49	8	4B	75	30	436,607
50	8	5A	75	30	450,408
51	8	5B	75	30	449,346
52	8	6A	75	30	427,052
53	8	8	150	36	767,051
54	8	9	150	36	753,037
55	8	10	150	36	727,558
56	8	11A	75	30	427,052
57	8	11B	75	30	458,901
58	8	12B	75	30	455,716
59	8	13B	75	30	440,853
60	8	14A	75	30	453,593
61	8	14B	75	30	452,531
62	8	15A	75	30	438,730
63	8	15B	75	30	434,483
64	8	18B	75	30	437,688
65	8	20B	75	30	458,901
66	8	21	144	36	806,360
67	8	22	174	36	843 407
68	10	3B	75	30	456,538
69	10	5B	75	30	441,219
70	10	6B	75	30	438,155
71	11	11B	75	30	330,444
72	12	2B	54	30	383,277
73	12	3A	54	30	376,908
74	12	3B	54	30	374,784
75	12	4A	54	30	370,538
76	12	5A	54	30	385,230
77	12	5B	54	30	380,093
78	12	8A	54	30	352,490

TIERRA DE STA. MARIA II
Sta. Maria, Bulacan

Prop No.	Blk	Lot	LOT Area (sqm)	HOUSE Flr Area (sqm)	Minimum Floor Price (Php)
1	35	31	120	43	628 417
2	34	11	120	43	614,800
3	26	20	152	54	792 300
4	22	13	92	36	494,400
5	22	40	96	42	549 600
6	24	1	64	27	367 350
7	30	8	88	42	543,700
8	21	5	96	36	504,000
9	28	0	64	27	367 350
10	23	0	96	36	504 000
11	44	22	120	43	614,800
12	24	5	98	36	504.000
13	24	3	64	27	367,350
14	26	13	98	32	483,733
15	33	8	120	43	628,417
16	45	3335	96	32	473,600
17	44	62	144	54	756,000
18	35	19	120	43	628 417
19	36	24	96	55	665,817
20	26	1	161	54	798 070
21	21	15	92	36	505,800
22	53	23	96	36	515 400
23	42	43	116	32	521 000
24	43	9/11	96	55	648 400
25	2	20	48	25	297 283
26	37	33	212	54	938 300
27	43	40	96	36	504 000
28	46	31	139	32	576,600
29	43	15	120	43	628 417
30	54	28	96	36	515 400
31	44	15	98	30	504,000
32	34	27	120	43	614,800
33	43	12	98	42	549,600
34	38	3	64	25	351 517
35	45	17	120	43	628 417
36	53	25	96	32	483 733
37	44	50	120	43	614 800
38	56	11	64	27	367,350

LA PAZ HOMES II
Trece Martires City, Cavite

Prop No.	Blk	Lot	LOT Area (sqm)	HOUSE Flr Area (sqm)	Minimum Offer Price (Php)
1	8	83	80	25	434,435
2	8	89	80	25	409,914
3	9	4	80	25	458,957
4	9	7	80	25	409,914
5	9	9	80	25	409,914
6	12	3	80	25	306,435
7	12	4	80	25	434,435
8	14	7	80	25	418,088
9	18	1	88	31	516,552
10	19	11	80	25	418,088
11	21	2	88	31	483,642
12	22	13	80	25	426,261
13	23	10	80	25	409,914
14	24	6	80	25	418,088
15	25	21	80	25	418,088
16	32	12	80	25	422,125
17	32	14	110	34	506,413
18	34	7	80	25	430,635
19	36	21	80	25	430,635
20	39	9	80	25	319,056
21	40	5	80	25	450,763
22	40	6	80	25	465,496
23	40	7	80	25	426,163
24	40	8	80	25	283,150
25	41	8	80	25	418,088
26	42	11	80	25	422,125
27	43	15	80	25	418,088
28	44	10	80	25	426 261
29	44	11	80	25	418,088
30	45	11	80	25	426 281
31	46	4	80	25	430 635
32	46	11	80	25	439,146
33	47	3	80	25	413,615
34	47	11	80	25	422,125
35	47	12	80	25	439,146
36	47	22	88	31	499,741
37	48	66	80	25	426,163
38	48	78	79	25	418,125
39	65	4	80	25	422,125
40	65	8	80	25	430,635
41	65	10	80	25	439,383
42	65	14	80	25	430 635
43	65	20	80	25	439,146
44	65	24	80	25	430,635
45	65	26	80	25	430,635
46	65	32	80	25	456,167
47	65	38	80	25	430 635
48	65	78	80	25	435,009
49	65	82	80	25	417,316
50	65	83	80	25	426,163
51	66	5	80	25	435,009
52	66	8	80	25	426,163
53	66	12	80	25	461,550
54	67	7	80	25	426,163
55	67	10	80	25	452,703
56	68	3	80	25	422,125
57	68	4	80	25	422,125
58	68	9	80	25	426 163
59	69	11	80	25	426,163
60	69	12	80	25	430,635
61	69	14	80	25	422,125
62	70	3	80	25	422,125
63	70	5	80	25	439,146
64	70	8	80	25	430 635
65	70	10	80	25	430,635
66	70	11	80	25	413 615
67	75	73	80	25	443,856

ST. MICHAEL HOMES
Binangonan, Rizal

Prop No.	Blk	Lot	LOT Area (sqm)	HOUSE Floor Area	Minimum Offer Price (Php)
1	2	16	35 75	18	237,575
2	1	11	35 75	18	226,175
3	1	17	35 75	18	226,175
4	1	4	35 75	18	226,175
5	4	1	106	32	508,200
6	4	9	88	32	483,200
7	5	8	74	22	366,133
8	3	13	96	32	488,200
9	5	3	72	22	361,133
10	8	21	70	22	371,133
11	4	7	88	32	463,200
12	1	14	35 75	18	226,175
13	3	10	88	32	463,200
14	1	8	35 75	18	226,175
15	1	6	35 75	18	226,175
16	5	5	72	22	381,133
17	1	25	35 75	18	237,575
18	1	3	37 30	18	230,200
19	5	13	80	22	381,133
20	1	13	35 75	18	226,175
21	1	12	35 75	18	226,175
22	4	5	88	32	463,200
23	5	10	72	22	381,133
24	1	5	35 75	18	220,175

VARIOUS LOCATIONS (Metro Manila, Bulacan)

PROP	TCT No.	AREA (sq. m.)	HOUSE & LOT	MINIMUM OFFER (Php)
1	109902	50	Blk 15 Lot 18 Lapidsville II San Rafael Bulacan	315,500
2	126914	65	Blk 16 Lot 2 Kalayaan Village Pasay City	609,743
3	211717	127.5	Blk 43, Lot 15 Fernandez St Katarungan Village Muntinlupa	748,650
4	81504	395	4010 Cul de Sac St Garville Subd., Ibayo Parañaque City	1,600,000
5	12726	416	4011 Cul de Sac St Garville Subd., Ibayo Parañaque City	1,777,000

MENZYLAND - Phase I Main
Brgy. Mojon, Malolos, Bulacan

Prop No.	Blk	Lot	LOT Area (sqm)	HOUSE Flr. Area (sqm)	Minimum Offer Price (Php)
1	1	31	48	20	270,069
2	1	32	48	20	268,600
3	1	37	48	20	275,947
4	1	49	48	20	275,947
5	2	23	48	20	268,600
6	2	25	48	20	275,947
7	2	28	48	20	275,947
8	2	32	48	20	275,947
9	3	19	50	20	282,547
10	3	27	49	20	279,247
11	3	31	48	20	275,947
12	3	41	47	20	266,709
13	3	50	46	20	262,000
14	4	20	42	20	262,024
15	4	21	42	0	138,600
16	4	33	41	20	245,500
17	4	34	41	0	135,300
18	5	28	39	20	238,900
19	5	29	38	0	125,400
20	5	30	38	20	235,600
21	5	31	38	0	125,400
22	5	37	38	20	238,539
23	5	38	38	0	125,400
24	6	4	48	20	268,600
25	6	15	47	20	265,300
26	7	6	78	20	364,661
27	7	12	90	20	407,200
28	7	23	90	24	438,050
29	7	26	78	20	374,947
30	7	28	78	24	389,640
31	12	25	60	20	308,200
32	19	10	120	25	537 423
33	19	16	120	25	533,750
34	19	27	50	20	276,200
35	23	23	100	20	443,139
36	25	12	120	25	533,750
37	25	17	120	25	542,933
38	25	18	120	25	533,750
39	25	27	120	25	537,423
40	25	28	120	25	533,750
41	25	29	120	36	578,491
42	28	44	78	20	367,600
43	28	51	78	20	364 661
44	28	56	78	20	364,661
45	28	57	78	20	367,600
46	28	61	78	20	367,600
47	29	30	48	20	268,600
48	29	49	48	20	268 600
49	29	55	78	20	367 600
50	29	63	48	20	268,600
51	29	67	78	20	367,600
52	29	71	48	20	268,600
53	29	72	48	20	268 600
54	35	24	60	20	308 200
55	35	30	60	20	314,077
56	35	32	60	20	308,200
57	35	35	48	20	268,600
58	35	42	60	20	312,608
59	36	11	90	20	407 200
60	36	12	78	20	367 600
61	36	17	60	20	308,200
62	36	19	60	20	314,077
63	36	27	60	20	308,200
64	36	39	60	20	308 200
65	36	40	78	30	422 700
66	36	43	60	20	305,201
67	37	4	120	36	594,360
68	37	10	120	35	604,939
69	37	13	120	36	594,360
70	46	21	120	36	594 360
71	46	22	120	36	607 584
72	46	30	120	25	533,750
73	46	44	120	25	533,750
74	48	23	78	20	367,600
75	48	31	78	20	372,008
76	48	34	78	20	372 008
77	48	40	78	20	367 600
78	51	5	89	30	459,000
79	51	16	48	20	268,600
80	51	27	48	20	268 600
81	51	44	48	20	268,600
82	51	47	48	20	268,600
83	51	49	48	20	268,600
84	51	51	48	20	268,600
85	51	52	48	20	268 600
86	51	57	89	30	459,000
87	52	32	90	20	407 200
88	52	47	48	20	268 600
89	54	4	90	30	462,300
90	54	8	90	30	468,912
91	14a	30	48	20	259,784
92	15a	12	48	20	262,723
93	15a	13	90	20	405,731
94	15a	26	48	20	268 600
95	15a	42	48	20	265 661
96	15a	54	48	20	262 723

JUDYVILLE SUBDIVISION
Sibulan, Negros Oriental

UNIT	Blk	Lot	TCT No	AREA (sq m)	MINIMUM OFFER (Php)
1	6	4	31620	100	346 000
2	12	20	31559	154	594,000
3	1	7	31868	100	357 000
4	17	23	31946	100	334 000
5	17	21	31898	100	366 000
6	1	11	31907	100	426 000
7	1	66	29659	100	353 000
8	17	15	31945	100	357 000
9	16	11	32051	100	674 000
10	13	8	30073	100	357 000
11	1	23	31692	100	357,000
12	1	6	31690	100	345 500
13	1	4	31032	100	345 500
14	1	5	31689	100	345,500
15	7	12	30959	100	355,200
16	16	3	32065	100	357 000
17	19	4	29982	100	357 000
18	1	67	32329	134	609,200

Venue of Bidding: Office of the Department Manager
2nd Floor, GSIS Bldg.
Daro, Dumaguete City
Date of Bidding: Friday, December 09, 2005

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1) Interested parties are required to secure copies of: (a) **INSTRUCTION TO OFFERORS** and (b) **OFFER FORMS** from the Disposition of Assets Department, 5th Level, Core "C", GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City;
2) Sealed proposals in triplicate will be received at the 3rd Level, Core "G", GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Financial Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City starting from **8:00 A.M. BUT NOT LATER THAN 1:30 P.M.** on **DECEMBER 16, 2005**, and immediately after which, the proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.
3) Each offer/proposal shall be accompanied by a **DEPOSIT IN CASH** or **CERTIFIED CASHIER's/MANAGER's CHECK** issued in Metro Manila. payable to the GSIS in an amount equivalent to at least **TEN (10%) PERCENT** of the total offer price.
4) Properties will be sold on an **"AS IS, WHERE IS BASIS"** and the winning offeror shall take possession of the property without seeking any assistance from the GSIS.
5) If the buyer who submitted the best offer refuses to push through with the purchase of the property for which he/she made an offer during and after the auction, his/her deposit shall be **FORFEITED in favor of the GSIS** and failure of offer shall be declared.
6) A buyer by submitting an offer, shall be deemed to have inspected the property and is aware of its physical and legal conditions.
7) The GSIS reserves the right to reject any and all offers, to waive any informality found therein or to accept any offers which in its judgment is advantageous to the GSIS.
8) **ALL AWARDS BY THE ACQUIRED ASSETS EVALUATION COMMITTEE (AAEC) ARE FINAL.**
9) **FOR ASSETS TO BE DISPOSED BY THE FIELD OFFICE, FORMS CAN BE SECURED FROM THE RESPECTIVE FIELD OFFICES.**

(SGD) RENATO R. SANTICO
Senior Vice President
Housing & Real Property Development Group

(PDI-Nov. 17, 2005)

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. DC2005-11-009

CREATION OF A TASK FORCE TO COORDINATE EFFORTS IN RELATION TO THE WESM COMMERCIAL OPERATION AND DIRECTING ALL ELECTRIC INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS TO ACCOMPLISH THE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION FOR READINESS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WESM

WHEREAS, Section 30 of Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001" or "EPIRA", enjoined the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) that would facilitate a transparent, competitive and reliable market for electricity;

WHEREAS, pursuant to said mandate, the DOE constituted, among others, the WESM Steering Committee on 31 May 2004, through Department Order No. 2004-06-007, to monitor the timeline, action plans and the overall target implementation of the WESM, and ensure the effective coordination of various activities amongst government agencies or functional units, industry participants and such other entities involved in the WESM;

WHEREAS, significant progress has been made towards the commencement of WESM commercial operation and the fundamental components of the market are expected to be completed or finalized, including: the Market Management System (MMS), formation of the respective committees, the processing of its filing with the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) for the approval of the Price Determination Methodology;

WHEREAS, considering this progress made and to assist the Philippine Electricity Market Corporation (PEMC), currently chaired by the DOE, in putting in place all the necessary components for the successful implementation of the WESM and in the interest of a transparent and level playing field for all industry participants, there is a need for a direct feedback mechanism to assess the overall readiness of various industry participants as would enable them to participate in the market as well as allow future market participants and service providers to assess and certify their own readiness to participate after WESM commences commercial operation;

NOW, THEREFORE, premises considered, the DOE hereby constitutes the Task Force on WESM Commercial Operation Readiness (TF-COR) and directs all industry participants to accomplish the initial self-assessment and certification forms in accordance with this Department Circular.

Section 1. Creation of the TASK FORCE on WESM COMMERCIAL OPERATION READINESS (TF-COR). To facilitate the regular monitoring and institute a feedback mechanism amongst responsible parties to facilitate the commercial operation of the WESM, a task force is hereby created to coordinate and report to the WESM Steering Committee issues or recommendation affecting the readiness of individual participants/their respective sectors for the commencement of WESM commercial operation.

Section 1.1. Composition of the Task Force. The TF-COR shall be composed of one representative and one alternate representative from each of the following agencies/entities:

Chairman	: Department of Energy
Co-Chairman	: Philippine Electricity Market Corporation-Market Operator (PEMC)
Members	: National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation (PSALM) National Power Corporation (NPC) National Electrification Administration (NEA) PEPOA PHILRECA MERALCO PIPPA

Section 1.2. Functions of the Task Force. The TF-COR shall exercise the following functions:

a. Provide regular updates every two (2) weeks to the WESM Steering Committee on the progress and status of the industry participants' respective readiness for the commercial operation of the WESM;
b. Coordinate efforts amongst industry participants and their respective sectors, convene and organize meetings for this purpose and implement a regular, efficient and direct feedback mechanism amongst responsible parties;
c. Facilitate mutual cooperation and sharing of information amongst the individual participants and provide the DOE necessary access to information on matters relevant to the determination of the basis for the declaration of the commencement of WESM commercial operation;
d. Identify issues in relation to the preparation of the industry for WESM commercial operation and provide recommendations for DOE Secretary's consideration towards the resolution of these issues;
e. Perform such other functions as may be necessary and delegated to it by the DOE for the successful to commencement of WESM commercial operation.

Section 1.3. Responsibilities of Each Functional Unit. In addition to the respective responsibilities that may be assigned to each member of the TF-COR, each agency/entity shall provide, subject to availability and internal approval processes, the necessary personnel and resources to lend administrative support to the TF-COR as may be necessary.

Section 1.4. Meetings. The TF-COR shall meet twice a month or more often at such other time as the DOE directs in order to assess the status of each sector's readiness. Within 15 calendar days from the effectivity of this Department Circular, each member of the TF-COR shall submit the list of its representative/alternate representative to the DOE. Within 10 calendar days thereafter, the DOE shall convene the first meeting of the TF-COR.

Section 2. Categories of WESM Participants. The following are the parties required to conduct their respective readiness assessment.

1. Generation Companies;
2. Network Service Providers –
   a. Electric Cooperatives;
   b. Distribution Utilities;
3. Distribution Utilities;
4. Customers;
5. Philippine Electricity Market Corporation;
6. National Transmission Corporation, as –
   a. System Operator;
   b. Metering Service Provider;
   c. Grid Operator; and
7. Suppliers/Aggregators.

Section 3. Compliance. All industry participants are each required to submit their respective initial self-assessment to the DOE, as Chair of the TF-COR, within 10 calendar days from the effectivity of this Circular. Every two weeks thereafter, unless the TF-COR provide otherwise, all industry participants shall submit to the TF-COR an update on their initial assessments, indicating any problem and/or actions taken thereon.

Section 4. Readiness of ECs. In the case of Electric Cooperatives (ECs), the National Electrification Administration (NEA), as member of the TF-COR, must henceforth assume primary responsibility to monitor the readiness of ECs and provide training programs and other necessary activities to encourage the ECs' effective participation in the WESM. Towards this end, NEA shall be primarily responsible for the preparation and submission by the ECs of the regular updates provided in Section 3 and NEA shall also provide the TF-COR with its recommendations and/or actions taken to address any problem indicated by the ECs in their updated assessments.

Section 5. Confidentiality. Any confidential information obtained by the TF-COR in the course of its review/assessment shall be maintained in full confidentiality and will be used solely for the purposes expressed in this Department Circular.

Section 6. No amendment or repeal of existing laws. Nothing in this Department Circular shall be construed as to amend, supplant, or repeal any of the mechanisms or institutions already existing or responsibilities already allocated and provided for under any existing law, rule or contract. However, to the extent necessary, previous issuances by this Department in relation to the subject matter herein shall be deemed amended accordingly.

This Department Circular shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation and shall remain in effect until otherwise revoked.

Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, November 11, 2005.

RAPHAEL P. M. LOTILLA
Secretary

(PDI--Nov. 17, 2005)

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

Manila Memorial Park
Leading the Way
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HOLY CROSS
DASMARIÑAS
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(632) 893 8374 to 77
BULACAN

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory

on the 2nd Death Anniversary of

ATTY. FLORENCIO T. SANTOS

who joined his Creator on November 17, 2003.

His family requests relatives, friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul and to remember him always in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory at the following churches:

Lourdes Church, Retiro St.	6:30 am
Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills	6:15 am
Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Ave.	6:00 am
Christ the King Church, Green Meadows	6 am, 7 am & 6 pm
St. Jude Parish Church, Malacañang	7 am & 5 pm
UP-PGH Chapel, Manila	6:30 am, 12:15 pm & 5 pm
Notre Dame des Victoires, Bush St., San Francisco, CA	12:10 pm
St. Patrick Church, Mission St., San Francisco, CA	12 noon
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Claret, QC	6:00 am, 6:00 pm

Lovingly Remembered And Sadly Missed

FEVI VELASQUEZ PURISIMA

on the 16th Year Anniversary of her birth to Eternal Life
November 17, 1989

Holy Masses will be offered at the following Churches:

Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage, *General Santos City*	5:45 a.m.
St. Joseph's Convent of Perpetual Adoration, *D. Hemady St., Q.C.*	6:00 a.m.
Parish of St. James the Great, *Ayala Alabang Village*	6:00 a.m.
St. Jerome Emiliani & St. Susana Parish, *Ayala Alabang*	6:00 a.m.
Immaculate Concepcion Parish Church, *Damar, Village, Q.C.*	6:15 a.m.
Sacred Heart Parish Church, *Kamuning, Quezon City*	7:00 a.m.
San Ildefonso Parish Church, *Ilocos Sur*	5:00 p.m.
St. Mary's Church, *Hudson, Ohio*	5:30 p.m.
Our Lady of the Abandoned Church, *Santa Ana, Manila*	6:30 p.m.

We, Fidel, Cesar, Dalia and Grace request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

DEMETRIO MAWILI PIGUING

of Tanay, Rizal

passed away in the grace of our Lord
on November 12, 2005 at the age of 81.

Mitong, "Papa ng Bayan", is fondly remembered as a devoted husband to GLORY; loving father to AL & Ina, JUDITH & Cesar, BABBIE & Tony, JOSEPH & Anabel, TOTIT & Grace, CHERRY & Benjie, BENG & Rezzie, ROSE & Jimmy, JAKE & Gemma, NENENG & Ferdie, VIC & Vilma; caring lolo to his 33 grandchildren; and thoughtful brother to his only surviving sister, BIBIANA (Sr. Orosia, SSpS).

A TEACHER, in the truest sense of the word, he left behind invaluable life lessons to everyone whose life he touched.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in 30 P. Burgos Street, Tanay, Rizal.

Interment is set for Saturday, Nov. 19, 2005 at the Haven of Rest Memorial Park after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the San Ildefonso Parish Church.

"Even when I walk
through a dark valley,
I feel no harm. For you are
at my side; your rod
and staff give me courage..."

Psalm 23:4

"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

John 11:25-26

Francisca "Paquita" Henson Roque

of Angeles City

Peacefully joined our Lord
on November 15, 2005 at the age of 93.

Her loving children and in-laws: **VIC & AIDA (TAN)**; children: ***Christy & Noel Deang***: *Joshua, Monina, Noynoy, Niño, Armando;* ***Jojo & Marilyn (Muñoz)****: Faith, Joey;* ***Koko & Abby (Bondoc)****: Kyle;* ***Jayjay & Celine (Cruz)****: Samantha, Lorenzo, Gabriel, Aaron* (†); ***Vanvan;*** **PACOY & PONG (ATTANATHO)**, children: *Francis,* ***Monica, Pan, Pang;*** **LENI & TOM RICAFORT**, children: ***Cocsi & Lynn (McCormick)****: Ulric, Iya;* ***Carlo, Mia, Franco, Paolo;*** **DOM CLEMENT MA., OSB.; JUMI & MELY (SANTOS)**, children: ***Jerome, Frances & Den-Den Wijangco****; Deian, Rafael;* ***Pinky;*** *Gica, Chynna;* ***Jessica;*** **DING & MILVIA (ASETRE)**, children: ***Ligel & Tee Canlas****: Yuan,* ***Jinggoy, Marci;*** **RICO & BETH** (†), children: ***Joyce, Angelo;*** **MENCI & TESS (AQUILIZAN)**, children: ***Michael, Raphael,*** **BABA & DOY PINEDA**, children: ***Zaita & Welmer Suarez, Lizette, Camille,*** **GRACE & EDDIE AGUILAR**, children: ***Christine, Ted, Justin;*** and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Holy Mary Memorial Chapels, Barrio Cutcut, Angeles City. Her body will be moved to the Holy Rosary Parish Church on Saturday, November 19 at 1:00 p.m.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 19, at the Holy Mary Memorial Park after the 2:30 p.m. Holy Mass at the Holy Rosary Parish Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations for the formation of seminarians at the Mater Boni Consilii Seminary of the Archdiocese of San Fernando will be greatly appreciated.

So Lovingly Remembered
So Sadly Missed

Our Beloved

Edgardo M. De Vera

On the day of the Second Anniversary
of his Birth to Eternal Life
November 17, 2003

HIS WIFE **LIZA** TOGETHER WITH THEIR CHILDREN, **FELICIA MARIE (ISHA), EDGARDO MIKHAEL (IGGY), MARTINA REINA (INYA)** REQUEST RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND PIOUS READERS TO PRAY FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

Masses at:	**SACRED HEART OF JESUS** Hillsborough, Muntinlupa City	6:00 a.m.
	ST. JEROME EMILLIANI & STA. SUSANA PARISH	12:15 p.m.
	ST. BENEDICT CHAPEL Alabang Hills	6:15 a.m.
	QUISUMBING TORRES LAW OFFICE Net One Center	2:00 p.m.

SUSANA CORTES AGUSTIN

of

Piddig, Ilocos Norte

Peacefully joined our Creator
on November 15, 2005.

Her children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state in Piddig, Ilocos Norte and will be transferred to the Loyola Memorial Chapel in Marikina City on the afternoon of Friday, November 18, 2005.

Interment will be on November 19, 2005 after the 3:00 p.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
— 2 Corinthians 5:8

EUFROCINIO "Boy" G. FIGUEROA

of San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga
died on November 13, 2005

His loving wife, Marilyn; daughter, Marla Elena; parents, Felicitas & Filomeno(†); brother and sisters Enriqueta, Filomeno Jr., Nancy, Sr. Mary Teresita, RGS; half-brothers and sisters Eleuteria, Melquiades, Catalino(†), Consolacion; brothers/sisters-in-law; nephews, nieces and grand children request for prayers for his eternal repose.

The wake is at the Good Shepherd Cemetery Memorial Chapel in San Fernando, Pampanga. Interment will be on Sunday, November 20, 2005 after the 8:00 AM mass.

"I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come."
-Psalm 23

THE CONGREGATION OF THE
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY (CICM)

requests your prayers for

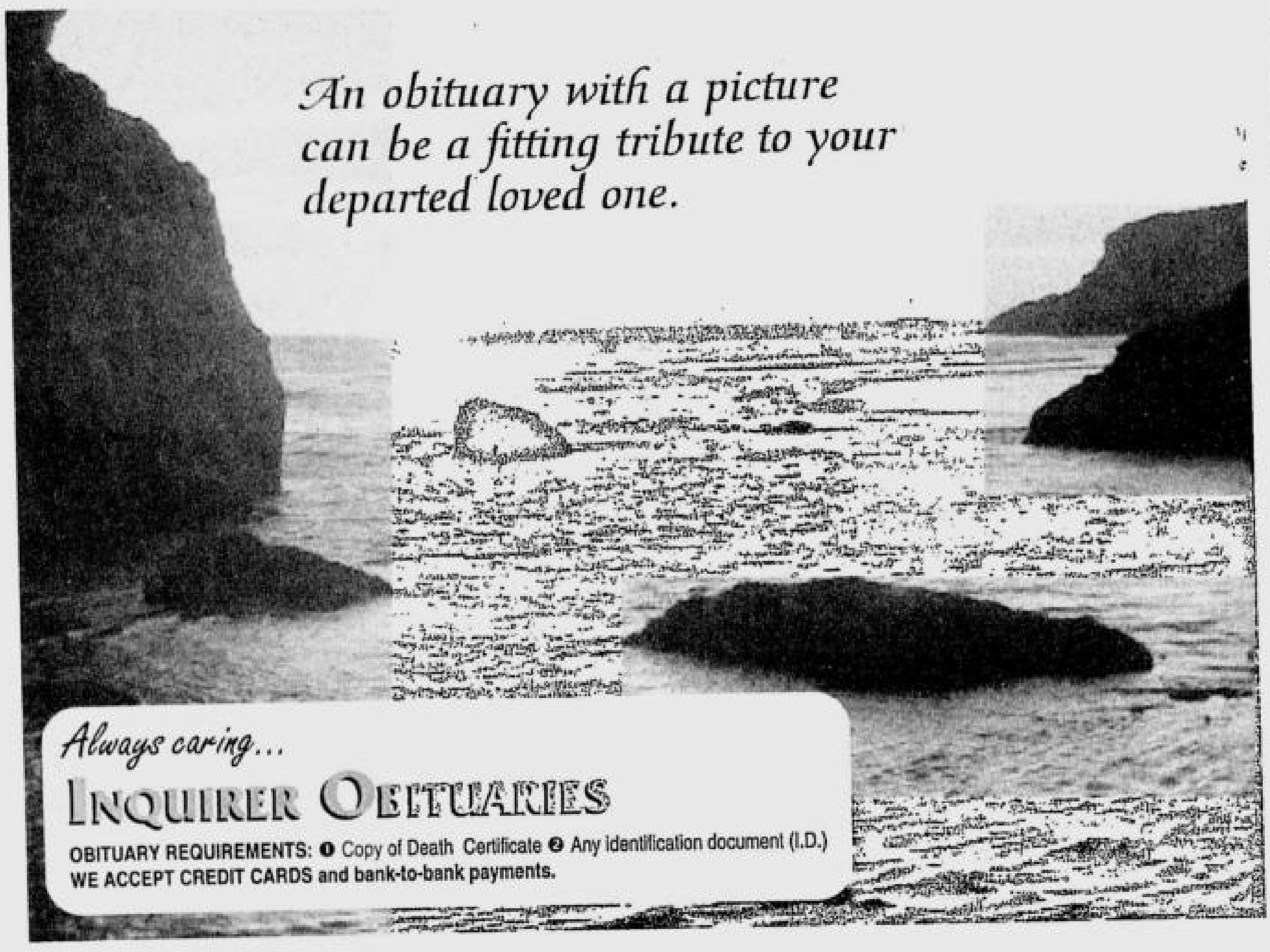
REV. FR. ROGER TJOLLE, CICM

born in Waregem, West Flanders, Belgium on June 05, 1922,
he died in Torhout, Belgium on November 14, 2005,
at the age of 83.

He served as School Director of Pasig Catholic College, Pasig, Rizal from 1950-1958.
He was Superintendent of CICM Schools from 1958-1998 and
Rector of Bahay ni San Jose (Quezon City) from 1991-1998.
He retired in North Belgium in 1998 until the time of his death.

His remains lie in state at the
CICM Retirement House at Bruggestraat 9, 8820 Torhout, Belgium.
Interment will be on Saturday, November 19, 2005,
at the Waranda Cemetery, Torhout,
after the 9:30 A.M. Mass of the Resurrection
at the Sint Pieterskerk, Torhout, Belgium.

PLEASE PRAY TO THE LORD FOR HIS ETERNAL REPOSE


An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments.

ALICIA SABARIA vda. de ONG

has peacefully joined her beloved husband VICENTE ONG and divine Creator on November 13, 2005 at the age of 67.

Her loving children **Henry & Jane, Helen & Solomon, Linda & Joey, Edwin & Nilda, Vidal & Marie, Ramon, Mary Ann & Washington, Nilian & Edison, Carlos & Teresita, Julie & Henson** and **Janeth**, grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Imperial Chapel, La Funeraria Paz,
143 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, November 20, 2005, 11:00 a.m. at Forest Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
BICOL REGIONAL TRAINING AND TEACHING HOSPITAL
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Legazpi City

INVITATION TO BID

We are inviting all interested suppliers to join the bidding for the supply and delivery of various Drugs and Medicines with approved budget for contract amounting to Php 5,668,893.10.

Bid documents may be secured from the BAC Secretariat located at the 2nd floor, Administrative Building, Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital, Legazpi City from October 28 – December 7, 2005 after payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 1,000.00.

The pre-bid conference is scheduled on November 24, 2005 at 9:00 AM at the Conference Hall, 2nd Floor Surgical Building Annex, BRTTH, Legazpi City. Opening of bids will follow shortly after dropping of bids at 9:00 AM on December 9, 2005 at the Conference Hall.

For more information, please call the following numbers (052) 483-0014/0017 local 421.

The hospital reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to waive any defect or annul the bidding process, and reject bids anytime prior to Award of Contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s or any obligations to inform the bidder/s on the ground for the action.

(Sgd.) **ESPERANZA R. MENDIOLA, MD.**
Chairperson

(PDI - Nov. 11 & 17, 2005)

Supervisory Leadership Development

December 2, 2005, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Holiday Inn, Galleria

The productive or anemic performance of your people and your business depends largely on your supervisors. If they can effectively guide, control and motivate the people, the desired result will be achieved. Unfortunately, supervision is anything but easy. In fact, what often happens is that when a productive worker is promoted to a supervisory position, the company loses an effective worker and gains a poor supervisor. This is known as the Peter Principle and this is largely attributable to lack of fundamental skills and attitude training in supervision. Lack of training is a sure-fire formula for failure. This powerful program is designed to equip and empower the Supervisors by providing them the fundamental and advanced concepts and tools to professionalize their management style and enable them to effectively lead their team.

LEARNING SEED

Session I : Why Some Supervisors Fail
Session II : Becoming a Supervisor
Session III : Some Nuts And Bolts of Supervison
Session IV : Planning and Goal Setting
Session V : Leading Your People
Session VI : How to Motivate for Result

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

* Now or recently promoted supervisors with less than three types of formal supervisory experience
* Experiences supervisors or managers reenteringthe job market and looking market to update their resumes
* Informal leaders who have an unofficial supervisory role leading teams of coworkers or volunteers
* Individuals whose career plans include becoming a supervisor in the near future

SEMINAR INVESTMENT
>>> EARLY BIRD RATE <<< P 1,195 + vat until November 24
>>>REGULAR RATE<<< P 1,495 + vat starting November 25
(complete with snacks, handouts and certificates)

CALL US NOW FOR INQUIRIES/RESERVATIONS
PORTER & MILES Look for Mercy 638-7719/20
Fax Number 637-6898 Email:pmi@alfos.net Website:www.pmi.com.ph

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital invites interested bidders/suppliers to the bid for the supply and delivery of the following:

ITEMS	ABC	Pre-bid Conference (Reception Hall)	Bid Opening (Reception Hall)
1. Foodstuffs	P 3,374,938.30	Nov. 30, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 12, 2005 (2:00 pm)
2. Equipment Rental - Hematology Analyzer - Immunology Machine - Chemistry Analyzer	 5,100,000.00 4,627,488.00 4,200,000.00	Nov. 30, 2005 (3:00 pm)	Dec. 14, 2005 (3:00 pm)
3. Medical Supplies Dermatological/Disinfectant	5,287,147.00 424,845.00	Dec. 1, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 15, 2005 (2:00 pm)
4. Laboratory Supplies Radiology/Ultrasound	1,773,156.00 213,636.00	Dec. 1, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 16, 2005 (2:00 pm)
5. Linen & Laundry Supplies Miscellaneous	253,940.00 155,000.00	Dec. 1, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 16, 2005 (3:30 pm)
6. Drugs and Medicines	25,073,764.00	Dec. 2, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 19, 2005 (2:00 pm)
7. Laundry Services	2,500,000.00	Dec. 5, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 19, 2005 (9:00 am)
8. Equipment Suction Machine, Portable (5 units) Suction Machine w/ trolley (2 units) Infusion Pump (8 units) LCD Projector, XGA Resolution (1 unit) Bassinets w/ mattress (38 units) ECG machine (1 unit) Laryngoscope, fiber optic, Pedia (6 units) Electrocautery, Adult (1 unit) Computer w/ complete accessories (3) Laptop (XGA) (1 unit) Laptop Computer (notebook) (1 unit) Computer w/out printer, Monitor 17" colored, CPU Pentium IV (1 unit) LCD Multimedia Projector 5 in 1 (1 unit)	 P 28,500.00/unit 38,000.00/unit 22,950.00/unit 115,000.00/unit 10,000.00/unit 160,000.00/unit 30,000.00/unit 280,000.00/unit 65,000.00/unit 90,000.00/unit 110,000.00/unit 50,000.00/unit 350,000.00/unit	Dec. 8, 2005 (2:00 pm)	Dec. 19, 2005 (10:00 am)

Bid documents and eligibility requirements may be secured from the BAC Secretariat, Administrative Office upon payment of corresponding fee which is non-refundable. For inquiries, contact tel. nos. 735-71-44, 734-55-61 loc. 109.

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waived any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated is the most advantageous to the government.

The DJFMH-BAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MARIE THERESE A. PACABIS**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Nov. 17 & 24, 2005)

ATCSA 17th Biennial Congress

NEW RESEARCH FINDINGS AND state-of-the-art overview sessions related to thoracic and cardiovascular surgery (TCVS) will be featured during the 17th Biennial Congress of the Association of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons of Asia (ATCSA) from Nov. 20-23 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

World famous heart and lung surgeons are coming to share their expertise in the field of thoracic and cardiovascular surgery with topics such as the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, esophageal surgery, aortic aneurysms and dissections, congenital heart surgery, surgery for the failing heart, valve, coronary, re-do cardiac, minimally invasive, cerebral protection, heart and lung transplantation and treatments for the critically ill patient.

The first Biennial Congress was held in Manila in 1972. More than 800 thoracic and cardiovascular surgeons, perfusionists, allied health specialists, and nurses from throughout the world will hear and discuss more than a hundred original research presentations.

Victoria Court bags the Mabuhay Award

AMONG THE 14 SUPERVISORY FINALISTS from different hotels, Victoria Court's (Hotel Victoria de Malate) shift manager, Antonio "Jun" won in the recently concluded Mabuhay Awards at Hyatt Regency Manila.

Mabuhay Awards (formerly the Gawad Lingkod), is the major program of Association of Human Resource Managers (Hotels and Restaurants) since 1984 with the objective of recognizing and rewarding model employees in the industry and to promote outstanding service commitment among our Filipino hospitality workers.

This is the first entry of the Victoria Court in the Mabuhay Award supervisory category and it is proud of its employee, Antonio "Jun" Seyan who represented Victoria Court's pursuit of excellence. Victoria Court's strategic business unit, Hotel La Corona won twice in the Gawad Lingkod, rank and file category.

The 31 year old, Antonio "Jun" Seyan started at Victoria Court as a management trainee in 2000. Because of his promising talent he was confirmed as a shift manager after six months. Victoria court recognized exemplary performance in 2004 Model Employee Award when he received the Officer of the Year Award.

Antonio "Jun" Seyan entries on cost leadership and operational excellence in the company's idea generation program, SIKAP (System Innovation Key Action Program) won, were recognized and awarded.

Antonio "Jun" Seyan will receive the 5 year Loyalty Award this coming November.

Antonio "Jun" Seyan is one of the Victoria Court's star employees who represents the organization's mission in Pursuit of Excellence in customer service, in developing its products and in developing its people.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
EIGHTH JUDICIAL REGION
BRANCH 4
DOLORES, EASTERN SAMAR

Land Reg. Case No. 160 LRA Record No. N-77157

NOTICE OF INITIAL HEARING

To the Hon. Solicitor General, Office of the Solicitor General, 134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City; the Director, Land Management Bureau, Escolta, Manila; the Regional Executive Director, Region VIII-DENR, Tacloban City; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways, Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila; the Director, Bureau of Mines, Pedro Gil St., Malate; the Director, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, P.O. Box 623, both in Manila; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform, PTA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, the Director, Forest Management Bureau, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, both in Quezon City, Metro Manila; the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Prosecutor, the General Services Officer, the Provincial Engineer, the Public Works and Highways District Engineer, the CENR Officer, CENRO, Land Management Sector, all in Borongan, Eastern Samar, the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Council, Can-Avid, Eastern Samar; Provincial Road, c/o Provincial Engineer's Office, Borongan, E. Samar, Can-Avid River, Can Avid Public Land Subd. Sec 01, Brgy. 03 & 07, both c/o CENR Officer, CENRO, LMS, Borongan, Eastern Samar, Salud P. Lim, Engracio Hesido, both in Brgy. 07, Borongan, Eastern Samar; **AND TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

An application having been filed in the above entitled case by **MUNICIPALITY OF CAN-AVID, EASTERN SAMAR**, represented by its Mayor, Hon. Gil Norman P. Germino, Can-Avid, Eastern Samar, thru Atty. Lauro A.P. Castillo, Jr., Room 107, Ground Floor, JOSMAR BLDG., Pilar St., Tacloban City, praying for the registration and confirmation of the title to the following described land.

A parcel of land designated as Ap-08-000703, (Identical/equivalent to Lot 220, Pls. 608-D, Can-avid Public Land Subdivision), situated in Barangay 7 (Poblacion), Municipality of Can-avid, Province of Eastern Samar, Island of Samar. Bounded on the SW., along lines 1-2-3 by lot 1542, Pls. 608-D; on the NW., along lines 3-4-5 by a Provincial Road; on the NE., along lines 5-6-7 by lot 219, Pls. 608-D; on the SE., along line 7-8 by Can-avid River (80-120 m. wide) with 20.00 m. wide legal easement and on the SW., along line 8-1 by lot 222, Pls. 608-D. Beginning at a point marked "1" on plan being S. 56 deg. 26'W., 789.02 m. from BLLM No. 1, Pls. 608-D, Can-avid Public Land Subdivision;

thence N. 53 deg. 52'E.,	108.74 m. to point 2;
thence N. 44 deg. 06'W.,	44.99 m to point 3;
thence N. 47 deg. 50'E.,	119.12 m. to point 4;
thence N. 47 deg. 33'E.,	194.82 m. to point 5;
thence S. 17 deg. 59'E.,	146.25 m. to point 6;
thence S. 22 deg. 51'E.,	31.89 m. to point 7;
thence S. 45 deg. 29'W.,	319.16 m. to point 8;
thence N. 54 deg. 33'W.,	145.48 m. to the point of

beginning, containing an area of **FIFTY EIGHT THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR (58,564) SQUARE METERS**, more or less. Bearing Grid. All corners are B.L. cyl. conc. mons. 15X60 cms. This lot was originally surveyed Bureau of Lands under the supervision of Engineer F.F. Cruz Co. Inc., and was duly approved on May 31, 1960 by the director, Bureau of Lands, Manila, Philippines. This advance plan was prepared on December 11, 2002 by the Chief, Technical Services Section and was approved on January 23, 2003 by the ARED for Operations, DENR Region VIII, Tacloban City.

You are hereby served this notice to appear before this Court at its session to be held at **Regional Trial Court, Branch 4, Dolores, Eastern Samar, Philippines, on the 21th day of December, 2005 at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon**, then and there to present such claim as you may have to said land or any portion thereof, and to submit evidence in support of such claim and unless you appear at said Court at the time and place aforesaid, your default will be recorded and the title to the land will be adjudicated and determined in accordance with law and the evidence before the Court and thereafter you will forever be barred from contesting said application (or petition) or any decree entered thereon.

Witness: the **HON. JULIANA ADALIM-WHITE**, Presiding Judge (Designate) of said Court, the 23rd day of August, 2005.

Issued at Quezon City, Philippines, this 15th day of September, 2005.

ATTEST:

(Sgd.) **BENEDICTO B. ULEP**
Administrator
Land Registration Authority

By: (Sgd.) **SALVADOR L. ORIEL**
Chief, Docket Division

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
(Sgd.) **GLORIETA P. LACAMBRA**
Chief, Publication of Notices Section

(PDI-Nov 17, 2005)

URGENTLY NEEDED

- JAVA PROGRAMMER
- FRONT-END WEB APPLICATIONS ENGINEER
- SERVER BASED APPLICATIONS ENGINEER

EXPERIENCED AND PREFERABLY GRADUATES OF REPUTABLE UNIVERSITIES OR COLLEGES

highly competitive salaries await successful applicants
PLEASE E-MAIL RESUMÉ TO:
upomc@yahoo.com

PAKIKIPAGKAPWA TAO sa PAGNENEGOSYO!!!

A business endorsed by local & national gov't officials.
If you are already earning **P50,000/month.**

TO SEE IS TO BELIEVE!

Those who responded to this AD are now earning more than

P100,000 PER MONTH

Holidays are coming – YOU NEED MONEY!

WE WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO TURN YOUR **P7,000** TO A **MULTI-MILLION PESO BUSINESS** distributing **Snoopy, Giordano, Timex, Barbie** and **SAN MIGUEL PRODUCTS (Coke, Sprite, Purefoods, Magnolia, Gran Matador, etc.)**

WE DARE YOU TO SEE US!

ATTEND OUR FREE ORIENTATION

NOV. 19, 2005 SATURDAY
10:00 AM; 1:00 PM; 4:00 PM; 6:00 PM

COME IN BUSINESS ATTIRE!

Tell your friends about this hottest business in town.

For Provincial inquiries, e-mail
lg_mariano@yahoo.com
Contact person: **Jhoy** and **Ricky**
09182124052 / 09196380782

Bring this AD and avail of product giveaways

Republic of the Philippines
POLYTECHNIC STATE COLLEGE OF ANTIQUE
Sibalom, Antique
Tel. Nos.: (036) 543-7956, 543-5626
Telefax No.: (036) 543-8161
E-mail: psca@wiays.com.ph

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE OF THE POLYTECHNIC STATE COLLEGE ANTIQUE (PSCA) PRESIDENCY

Announces the opening of the

SEARCH FOR PSCA PRESIDENT

Minimum Qualifications:

1. Must be a natural born Filipino citizen;
2. Preferably a holder of any earned doctoral degrees;
3. Preferably not more than sixty years of age on the date of application;
4. Must have five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience;
5. Must submit a certification of full disclosure of pending criminal or administrative cases that he has not been convicted by final judgment.

In addition to the above-mentioned qualifications, applicants must submit the following documentary requirements in five (5) copies:

1. Letter of application;
2. Detailed Curriculum vitaé and certified supporting documents;
3. Proposed Mission, Vision and Thrust for the College;
4. Medical Certificate

Interested applicants are requested to submit the requirements not later than 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon on January 7, 2006 to the following:

HJA. LUNINGNING MISUAREZ-UMAR
Commissioner, Commission on Higher Education
Chair, PSCA-Board of Trustees
5th Floor, DAP Building
Ortigas Center, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City
Tel. No. (02) 6874647
Telefax No. (02) 9100824

DR. ISABELA L. MAHLER
CHED Director IV, Region VI
Chairperson, Search Committee for PSCA Presidency
Washington St., Jaro, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033) 320-69-76 or (033) 508-88-52

LOURDES M. PECHAYCO
Secretariat, Search Committee for PSCA Presidency
Office of the Board Secretary
Polytechnic State College of Antique
Sibalom, Antique
Tel. Nos. (036) 543-8161 loc. 110

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : November 16, 2005
Loan No.: MIYAZAWA
Contract No.: Sp05.NPS1TLSS.VI-0052

1. The *National Power Corporation (NPC)* has received a loan from the *Miyazawa Funds* for *Negros-Panay Interconnection Project* (Stage 1) and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract *Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/ Installation and Commissioning of Negros-Panay (Stage 1 – OHTL & S/S) Project.*
2. The *National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO)*, administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the:

   Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/ Installation and Commissioning of Negros-Panay (Stage 1 – OHTL & S/S) Project.
3. Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents at the *Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department, Ground Floor, Power Center, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Telephone No.: 981-2212, 981-2213, 981-4652; Telefax No.: 921-23-08.*
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting November 16, 2005 upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Twenty Five Thousand Pesos (PHP25,000.00).*
5. A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2)-sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals will be opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders of which are not substantially responsive will be rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance. The bidders may or may not submit a supplementary price proposal, which contain the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in the technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of:

   One Hundred Thirty Four Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty US Dollars (US$134,750.00).

   The bid security must be included in the technical proposal.

   Pre-bid Conference shall be conducted on **December 16, 2005.**

   The deadline for the submission of bids will be on **January 16, 2006** at **1:30 P.M.** at the aforementioned address. Late submissions will be rejected.
7. The technical proposals together with the bid security will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend.
8. The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
9. The total contract duration for the project is **450 calendar days.**
10. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all Bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. All communications shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee at aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **GUILLERMO R. REDOBLADO**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Nov. 17 & 24, 2005)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE-INFRASTRUCTURE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

The Province of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee-Infrastructure (BAC-INFRA), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and to re-bid for the hereunder contracts:

General
Title : Road Improvement Projects (Asphalting), Phase 3
Scope : Items of work include, but not limited to, asphalting, line ditching, cross drainage & slope protection

Particulars

Package	ABC (PhP)	Duration (c.d.)	PCAB Category ARCC-based	Location	Plans and Bid Documents (PhP)
1	36,767,138.77	90	Medium A	1st district, Mainland Cebu	10,000.00
2	82,397,560.91	150	Medium B	2nd district, Mainland Cebu	20,000.00
3	38,106,846.92	100	Medium A	3rd district, Mainland Cebu	10,000.00
4	47,498,095.96	110	Medium A	4th district, Mainland Cebu	10,000.00
5	32,027,096.73	90	Medium A	5th district, Mainland Cebu	10,000.00
6	28,126,845.76	90	Medium A	4th district, Bantayan Island	10,000.00
7	35,074,414.96	100	Medium A	5th district, Camotes Island	10,000.00

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the ABC per package, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC-INFRA will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening and in the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC-INFRA will conduct post qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Submission of Eligibility Documents/Statements and Screening, Bid and Performance Securities, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract, shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is as follows:

BAC-INFRA Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) Including Application for Eligibility	Nov. 17-23, 2005
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Nov. 17-23, 2005
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	Nov. 23, 2005
4. Notice of Eligibility Check Results	Nov. 25, 2005
5. Issuance of Plans and Bid Documents	Nov. 25, 2005
6. Pre-bid Conference	Nov. 28, 2005
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	Dec. 9, 2005

The BAC-INFRA Secretariat will issue to prospective bidder's Eligibility Forms at the Provincial Engineer's Office, Legislative and Engineering Building, Capitol Compound, Cebu City, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent stating and specifying therein which Package/s they intend to undertake and payment of non-refundable amount of Fifty Pesos (P50.00) for each Package to the Cash Division. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to, and may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check from the aforementioned address. For further inquiries, one may call the Secretariat at (032) 416-5400 local 110.

The Secretariat will issue Bidding Documents including Plans and Specifications only to bidders declared by the BAC-INFRA who are found to be eligible to bid, upon payment to the Cash Division a non-refundable amount as above-stated.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids and reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding or not to award the contract.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman, BAC-INFRA

(PDI–Nov. 17 & 23, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF BAIS
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Bais invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the following items, for use in various INFRA PROJECTS and in the garbage collection activity of this City.

ITEM	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
1) 1 unit BRAND NEW VIBRATORY ROLLER; Engine : 110 Hp@ 2200 rpm Operating wt. : 12,000 kg. Drum width : 2,100 mm (minimum) Drum diameter : 1,480 mm (minimum) Propulsion type : Hydrostatic, 2 speed drum drive motor and single speed motor on planetary axle with No-Spin differential Drum drive : Low speed, high torque motor Tire size : 23.1 x 26 – 8 PR Articulation angle : + / - 35 degrees minimum Oscillation angle : +/ - 15 degrees minimum Grade ability : 50% minimum	P 5,500,000.00
2) 1 unit GARBAGE COMPACTOR, surplus, A-1 condition, 4-tons capacity left-hand drive, diesel engine driven, reconditioned w/ brand new tires including spare tire, new batteries and paint, w/ hydraulic jack & tire wrench and with one year free insurance and registration in the name of City of Bais, with warranty	650,000.00
TOTAL	P 6,150,000.00

The approved budget for the contract is to be taken from the 20% Development Fund. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

In order to qualify, bidders should conform to the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Sec. 23.11 of the IRR-A of R.A. 9184.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. As such non-submission of the required documents will result in the disqualification of the bidder.

All other particulars relative to the procurement process shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The bid documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the City Mayor or at the General Services Office, this city starting November 18, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P500.00)

All interested parties are invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on November 22, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. at the Conference Room, Office of the City Mayor.

For more information, please call BAC Secretariat at telephone no. (035) 402-3182 or General Services Officer at telephone no. (035) 402-8115.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility, technical, and financial documents each in separate sealed envelopes duly marked as such in the bid box at the Conference Room at the Office of the City Mayor on December 5, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. at which place, date and time said envelopes shall be opened in the presence of the members of the BAC, the attending bidders, the observers, or their duly authorized representative. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The City Government of Bais reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

CARMELINO L. MORALES
(City General Services Officer)
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Nov. 11 & 17, 2005)

Schools First Means Students First

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PROCUREMENT SERVICE
5th Floor, Mabini Bldg. DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City
Telephone Nos. 636-65-43; Telefax No. 6366542, 633-93-43
Website: http://www.DepED.gov.ph; E-mail: deped_procurementservice@yahoo.com

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(RE-BID)

The Department Of Education Division Offices, through its Division Bids and Awards Committees (BAC's), invites suppliers/ manufacturers/ distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

NAME OF PROJECT : Supply and Delivery of Elementary Tables & Chairs and Secondary Armchairs
LOCATION : Various Division Offices of the Department of Education
BRIEF DESCRIPTION : Lot A : Elementary Tables & Chairs (CY2004)
Lot B: Secondary Armchairs (CY2004)
Lot C: Elementary Tables & Chairs (CY2005)
Lot D: Secondary Armchairs (CY2005)
ABC & FUNDING SOURCE : Funding Source is the Government of the Philippines (GOP). CY2004 and CY2005 General Appropriations Act (GAA) (75% Allocation)
CONTRACT DURATION : One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days
DELIVERY SITES : "Door to door" delivery to various recipient schools (See Schedule of Requirements of the Bidding Documents)

PROCURING ENTITY		APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)							
		CY 2004				CY 2005			
DepED Division Office	Address	Lot A (Elem. Tables and Chairs)		Lot B (Secondary Arm Chairs)		Lot C (Elem. Tables and Chairs)		Lot D (Secondary Arm Chairs)	
		Qty	Amount	Qty	Amount	Qty	Amount	Qty	Amount
REGION I		0		0		154	184,800.00	400	220,000.00
ALAMINOS CITY	Alaminos City	-			-	154	184,800.00	400	220,000.00
REGION III		4100	4,920,000.00	2447	1,345,850.00	7920	9,504,000.00	4999	2,749,450.00
BULACAN	Malolos, Bulacan	4100	4,920,000.00	2447	1,345,850.00	7920	9,504,000.00	4999	2,749,450.00
REGION IV-B		285	342,000.00	1565	860,750.00	438	525,600.00	4360	2,398,000.00
ROMBLON	Romblon, Romblon	285	342,000.00	1565	860,750.00	438	525,600.00	4360	2,398,000.00
REGION VII		128	115,200.00	290	130,500.00	136	122,400.00	735	330,750.00
SIQUIJOR	Larena, Siquijor	128	115,200.00	290	130,500.00	136	122,400.00	735	330,750.00
REGION VIII		750	900,000.00	1,071	589,050.00	2,250	2,700,000.00	2,683	1,475,650.00
EASTERN SAMAR	Borongan, Eastern Samar	750	900,000.00	1,071	589,050.00	2,250	2,700,000.00	2,683	1,475,650.00
REGION XII		1440	1,728,000.00	925	508,750.00	3144	3,772,800.00	2750	1,512,500.00
KORONADAL CITY	Koronadal City, South Cotabato		-	425	233,750.00		-	727	399,850.00
SARANGANI	Alabel, Sarangani	1440	1,728,000.00	500	275,000.00	3144	3,772,800.00	2023	1,112,650.00
GRAND TOTAL -		6703	8,005,200.00	6298	3,434,900.00	14042	16,809,600.00	15927	8,686,350.00

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interests or outstanding capital stocks belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II, Instruction to Biddeers of the Bidding Documents.

The DepED Division Offices will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all prospective bidders on **November 24, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the **Division Offices.**

Bids must be received on or before **December 5, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at the **Division Office.** Late Bids shall be rejected.

Bids in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract per Lot shall be rejected.

Bid Documents will be available to **prospective bidders** upon payment of a non-refundable amount of not more than **Two Thousand Pesos Only** (Php2,000.00) to the Division Office's Cashier.

The Department of Education, reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) Atty. **MACUR MAROHOMBSAR**
BAC, Vice Chairman

(PDI–November 10 & 17, 2005)

Schools First Means Students First

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation & Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING & REGULATORY BOARD

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) invites all qualified agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the procurement of security services, consisting of:

1. Numbers Needed: 13 Security Guards for Metro Manila
   24 Security Guards for Regional Posting
2. Scope of Work
   a. Areas to be serviced: all buildings, structures, project sites, exhibit site, motor vehicles within the LTFRB compound and its perimeter;
   b. Protect life of LTFRB officials and employees, and other properties in the LTFRB Offices and premises,
   c. To provide One (1) Unit, (24-hours, 7 days per week) Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and sixteen (16) Monitoring Camera System in strategic areas for all LTFRB Offices and Installations. Tapes shall be preserved and stored for 1 month before reuse;
   d. Up-to-date security paraphernalia such as metal wand-detectors (One (1) unit/region and two (2) units at Central Office) bomb/drug-sniffing K9 (optional as needed), adequate crowd control materials (as needed) F/As for all SGs, etc.
3. Other requirements will be provided in the Bid Documents.
4. Approved Budget of the Contract (ABC) is Php 7.0 million.
5. The duration of the Contract is 12 months (01 January to 31 December 2006).

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar type of service within the last 2 years, must be financially capable to bid, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or purchased) available for the implementation of the said service. The lists of minimum equipment required are indicated in the Eligibility Forms The Eligibility Check/Screening, as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids, shall use a non-discretionary "PASS FAIL" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.
All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference(s), Post-qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), and as further stipulated in the Bid's Terms and Reference.
Schedule of activities are as follows:

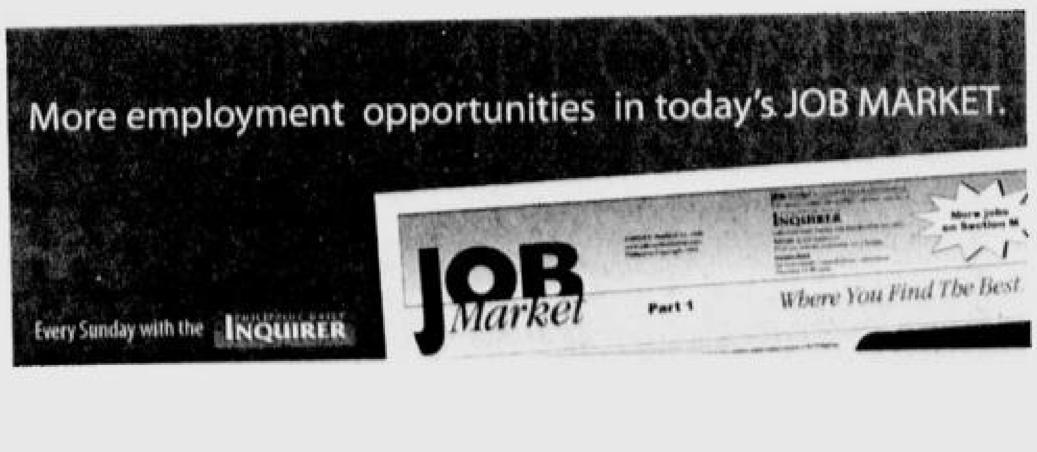
Activities	Date	Time	Venue
1. Bid Documents Acquisition and Registration	14-28 November 2005	2:00 PM	LTFRB (BAC Secretariat)
2. Pre-Bid Conference	30 November 2005	2:00 PM	LTFRB Conference Hall
3. Last Day-Submission of Bids	12 December 2005	12:00 Noon	LTFRB (BAC Secretariat)
4. Opening of Bids and Eligibility	12 December 2005	2:00 PM	LTFRB Conference Hall

Bid documents can be obtained from the BAC Secretariat by the prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 20,000.00.
For further inquiries, please contact the LTFRB BAC Secretariat at Telephone Nos.: 426-2501 & 426-2485.
LTFRB reserves the right to reject all bids, to waive any formalities or defects found, or to accept such bids to award to any agency whose bid is most advantageous to the LTFRB, in particular, or to the government in general.

(Sgd.) **EXEC. DIR. RONALDO M. SALUNGA**
LTFRB BAC CHAIRMAN

* This is the second and modified installment of LTFRB IAEB regarding Security Services, as previously advertised on 09 November 2005.

(PDI - Nov. 17, 2005)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Cooking with Lola

IN A BULACAN kitchen taking notes about the local *pancit palabok*
PHOTO BY ED SANTIAGO.

A grandmother's kitchen serves as good training ground for observing and tasting culinary secrets

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

SINCE I GREW UP IN Manila, the earliest and the closest to country cooking I've experienced was in my maternal grandmother's urban kitchen. Lola was known for her culinary magic and it was lucky that my sisters and I had to stay with her while my parents were seeking a cure for my father's ailment in the United States.

Outside Lola's kitchen, chicken and turkey were slaughtered, plucked of feathers then washed in boiling water. Her kitchen door was where the man who owned the carabaos roaming outside her fence would deposit the rich milk from those docile creatures; she would pour the milk into her morning coffee. That coffee was where she dunked her *pan de sal* wiped with butter. A sip from her cup is one of my pleasurable childhood memories.

The only time Lola's kitchen was quiet was during the household's afternoon nap. The buzz was almost constant because *lola* fed not only her grandchildren but also my *lolo*, her unmarried children and the daily stream of kin that wisely timed their visit close to lunch or dinner.

Children weren't allowed in her kitchen while the cooking was going on. But on special occasions, when more hands were needed, little girls were recruited. The job was always the most boring work, constant stirring to produce the thick gooey *halayang ube* (yam jam) or the mayonnaise made from scratch. The exercise would include a little slap on the hand for doing the work too slowly.

Unwritten rule

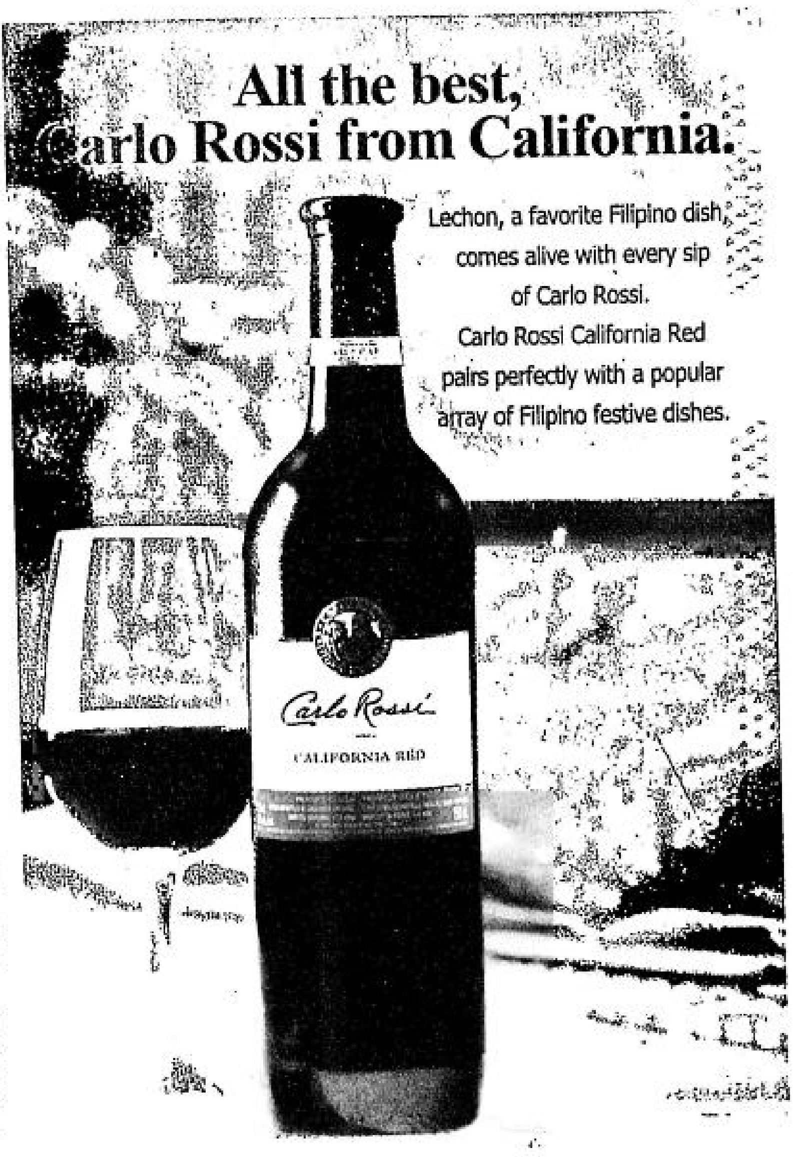
It was an unwritten rule that Lola was never to be asked about recipe measurements or techniques. Like all good cooks, she knew just how much of an ingredient was needed and adjusted after just one taste. My godmother, Nora Daza, said she was never successful in extracting recipes from Lola, especially the *lechon* that Lola cooked in the oven. Years later, Lola did allow my more cooking-astute sister to learn from her the fine art of deboning chicken and making *galantina* (stuffed chicken roll).

And she did deign to tell me when she learned I was writing about food that the secret of her fish *paksiw* was to make sure the vinegar was cooked before putting in the fish.

As children, we always knew that the table was set when we heard Lola summoning diners, "Vamos!" Until I took Spanish lessons, I thought that was Spanish for "Let's eat."

Lola's specialty was her *tinolang manok*, stewed native chicken that still had unhatched eggs (called *sapola*, according to writer Krip Yuson) inside its body. There was that excellent fish *paksiw*. Seafood was always present on her table because she was from Bataan where her family (Reyes,

COOKING/ C4



All the best, Carlo Rossi from California.
Lechon, a favorite Filipino dish, comes alive with every sip of Carlo Rossi.
Carlo Rossi California Red pairs perfectly with a popular array of Filipino festive dishes.

See more of this idol at Ayala Malls.
Catch Constantine Maroulis live on these dates:
Nov. 17, 2005 8:00pm Greenbelt 3 Park, Ayala Greenbelt
Nov. 18, 2005 7:00pm Activity Center, Alabang Town Center
Nov. 19, 2005 8:30pm AFLC Fountain Area, Ayala Center Cebu
Reserved seats for Discount Plus Cardholders.
For Ayala Greenbelt inquiries, call 7527272. For Alabang Town Center seats, please call 8422782.
Ayala Greenbelt
Alabang Town Center
Ayala Center Cebu
Globe Handyphone
www.ayalamalls.com.ph
Photo courtesy of Emily Optics.

Toast to Beaujolais tonight

AT EXACTLY A MINUTE past midnight of every third Thursday of November each year, millions of cases of Beaujolais Nouveau wines are consumed in bars and cafés throughout France.

Not all cases are unloaded within French boundaries. A lot more are opened in far-off places. As the signs proclaiming "*Le Beaujolais Nouveau est arrivé!* (The Beaujolais Nouveau has arrived!)" spring up, people wait with bated breath to sample the young red wine.

French communities around the world celebrate Beaujolais Nouveau, making it the biggest and most successful French wine event globally.

This merry-making half a world away comes to Manila once more as Le Club-French Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines brings the 17th Soirée Beaujolais, with this year's theme "La Pyramide du Louvre," tonight at the NBC Tent, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

The motif of the venue will be inspired by the famous Louvre Museum with replicas of its Pyramid and immortal artworks such as "Venus de Milo" and Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa."

There will be a wide array of *charcuteries*, cheeses, pastries and other specialties flown directly from France. Guests can enjoy these and more in the ambiance of a French street café.

Again this year, numerous VIP sponsors lent their support to this unique event: HSBC, Jewelmer, BNP Paribas, Calyon, Le Cellier, Nescafé Gold, Oberthur, Pamatec/Peugeot Open Europe and Total.

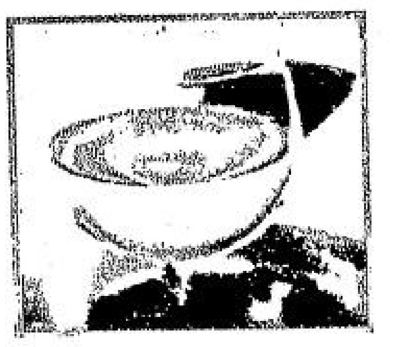
The Manila Symphony Orchestra II (MSO), brought in by major sponsor Globe Platinum, will launch the party with music from French composers and Broadway musicals set in Paris, along with the Alliance Française-sponsored show directed by Rico Labayen.

Ntwine and Hi-Way 69 bands, courtesy of Crown Relocations, will rock the night away in the ensuing dance party which will last way past midnight.

Johnny Litton and Pat Evangelista will host.

The traditional raffle will offer handsome prizes worth over P700,000. The grand prize is a Manila-Paris round-trip ticket from Air France-KLM with a 17-day free use of a Peugeot 307 HDI car courtesy of Peugeot Open Europe.

Other grand prizes are another Manila-Paris Air France-KLM round-trip ticket and a South Sea Pearl Jewelry from Jewelmer.



Also up for grabs are a vacation package to Miniloc Island from El Nido resorts, classic antique Chinese furniture from Raffles Fine Arts, a corkscrew in sterling silver, carabao horn and red garnets from Artebylis, a vacation package to Boracay from Red Coconut Beach Resort and Interisland Resorts, jewelry items from JLP Consulting, and a six-level French language course from Alliance Française de Manille.

Flowing wine and buffet start at 6:30 p.m. Contact Le Club at 8139005 or 8120433 or e-mail le_club@globelines.com.ph for tickets to this fabulous annual harvest fête.

From our kitchen to yours

HOMEMADE FOOD MAKE for extra special holiday presents. San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center shares these recipes that you can turn into heartwarming gifts for your loved ones or even sell this season. For more recipe ideas, visit www.mygreatfood.com or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center Legaspi cor. Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City.

Roast Rib-Eye with Herbed Crust

Ingredients:
1.5 kg Monterey rib-eye roast
Marinade:
1/3 c red wine
2 tbsp brown sugar
2 tbsp Kikkoman soy sauce
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
10 cloves garlic, crushed
Coating:
3 tbsp dried rosemary
2 tbsp coarse salt
1 tsp dried thyme
2 tbsp crushed black peppercorns
½ c coarse bread crumbs

Procedure:

Take out meat from the freezer and let thaw in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Insert crushed garlic into the meat by puncturing meat with sharp knife. Marinate with the marinade mixture at least three hours. Turnover at least once.

Preheat oven to 400 °F or 200 °C. Combine all herbs and bread crumbs and pat mixture on beef to create a crust. Roast uncovered for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 180 °C (350 °F).

Cooking guide:
Rare: 1 hour 20 minutes
Med rare: 1 hour 35 minutes
Well done: 2 hours

Note: You can also insert a meat thermometer into the thickest portion of the meat and be guided by the internal temperature guide.

Carve into half-inch slices using a sharp carving knife after letting roast rest for 15 minutes after cooking.

Gravy

Ingredients:
¼ c Magnolia Gold Butter
¼ c all-purpose flour
2 pc bouillon cube, dissolved in 1 ¾ c water
¼ c red wine
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
Ground black pepper to taste

Procedure:

Melt butter in a saucepan. Blend in flour and mix to form a paste. Pour beef broth in a thin, steady stream while stirring. Add red wine and allow to boil. Season with Worcestershire sauce and pepper. Cook until thick over moderate heat stirring constantly. Serve with roast beef.

Here's to good wines

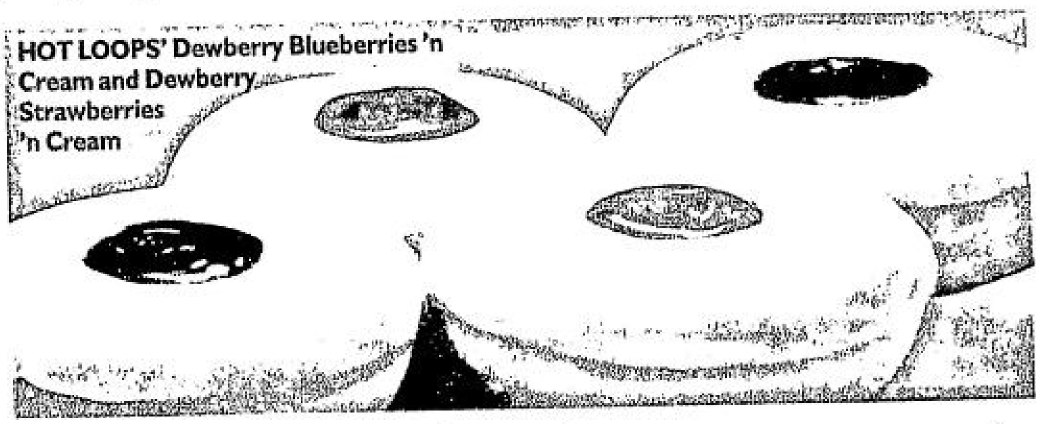
NOW ON ITS FIFTH YEAR, THE GRAND Wine Experience, a celebration of over 400 wines from 16 of the top wine-producing countries in the world matched with fine cuisine, will be held at 6 p.m. on Nov. 18 at the New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City.

A brainchild of Ralph Lim Joseph, Ralph's Wines & Spirits president, the event will benefit the Travel Cooperative of the Philippines and Bantay Kalikasan Foundation.

The wines will come from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Moldavia, New Zealand, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain and the US.

"We are the country's No. 1 wine importer and distributor with over 30 years' experience," said Ronald Lim Joseph, Ralph's director.

The festival has the support of the Philippine Tourism Authority and the Department of Tourism.



HOT LOOPS' Dewberry Blueberries 'n Cream and Dewberry Strawberries 'n Cream

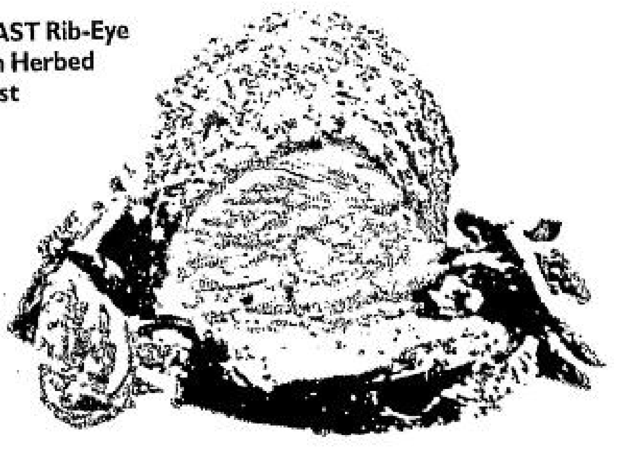
New donuts for the sweet tooth

HOT LOOPS INTRODUCES NEW DONUT selections to satisfy your sweet tooth: Donut versions of the popular Jack 'n Jill fruity biscuit that everyone has come to love—Dewberry in both Blueberry and Strawberry flavors.

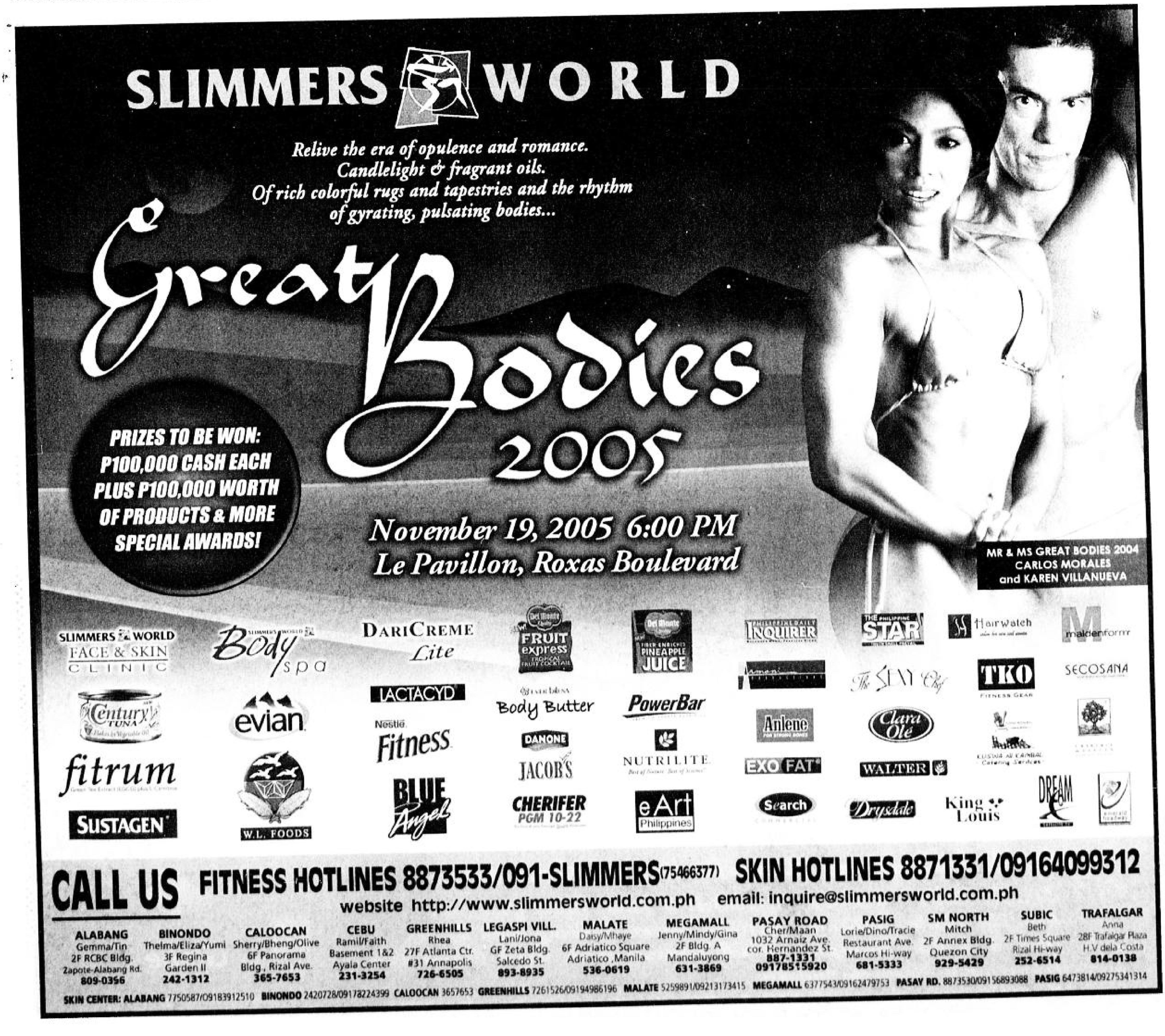
Dewberry Blueberries 'n Cream is a golden ring with special blueberry crème on top of a classic white choco frost, while the Dewberry Strawberries 'n Cream is an exquisite combination of strawberry crème and white choco frost.

The delightful Dewberry fruity flavors are the newest addition to Hot Loops' delicious, inventive, more-than-your-usual donuts such as Choco-Lickety, Strawberry Good!, Glazy Days, Bavarian Dream, Peanut Better, Caramelt-in-your-Mouth, Choco-Caramel-Crunch, Choco-Nutty-Rush, White Choco Fantasy, Hazy Berry, White Choco Chip and Soda Pop Donuts.

Hot Loops dine-in shops are located at G/F Robinsons Pioneer and at 4/L Robinsons Galleria. Hot Loops donuts are also available in 130 Ministop stores around the metropolis, and in Robinsons Supermarkets located in Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Ermita, Robinsons Commonwealth, Robinsons Congressional and Big R Metro East.



ROAST Rib-Eye with Herbed Crust



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2F RCBC Bldg. Zapote-Alabang Rd.	3F Regina Garden II	6F Panorama Bldg., Rizal Ave.	Basement 1&2 Ayala Center	27F Atlanta Ctr. #31 Annapolis	GF Zeta Bldg. Salcedo St.	6F Adriatico Square Adriatico ,Manila	2F Bldg. A Mandaluyong	1032 Arnaiz Ave. cor. Hernandez St.	Restaurant Ave. Marcos Hi-way	2F Annex Bldg. Quezon City	2F Times Square Rizal Hi-way	28F Trafalgar Plaza H.V dela Costa
809-0356	242-1312	365-7653	231-3254	726-6505	893-8935	536-0619	631-3869	887-1331 09178515920	681-5333	929-5429	252-6514	814-0138

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A fusion of delights

DINING OUT

LITTLE ASIA ON TOMAS MORATO CORNER Scout Fuentebella Sts. in Quezon City (3730609/4104937) and at 2/L Promenade, Greenhills (7275265/5785), offers new dishes including the Vietnamese Crispy Chicken Wings with Garlic. Its signature dishes are Salt and Pepper Frogs Legs, Sizzling Balut (*balut* topped with sautéed onions and garlic) and Velvet Prawns with Caramelized Nuts (deep-fried prawns with cashews). Desserts include Caramel Mango Tower and Crepe Samurai.

EDSA Shangri-La's Summer Palace offers herbal cuisine by Chinese executive chef Stephen Tam. A la carte and set menus include Stir-fried Shrimps with Ginkoes Nuts, Fish head soup with Fox Nuts, Double-boiled Chicken with Ginseng, Beef Fillet with Dong Gui, among others. Available until Nov. 30. The restaurant is open daily lunch, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. and dinner 6:30-10 p.m. Call 6347373 or 6338888 loc. 2738 or 2739.

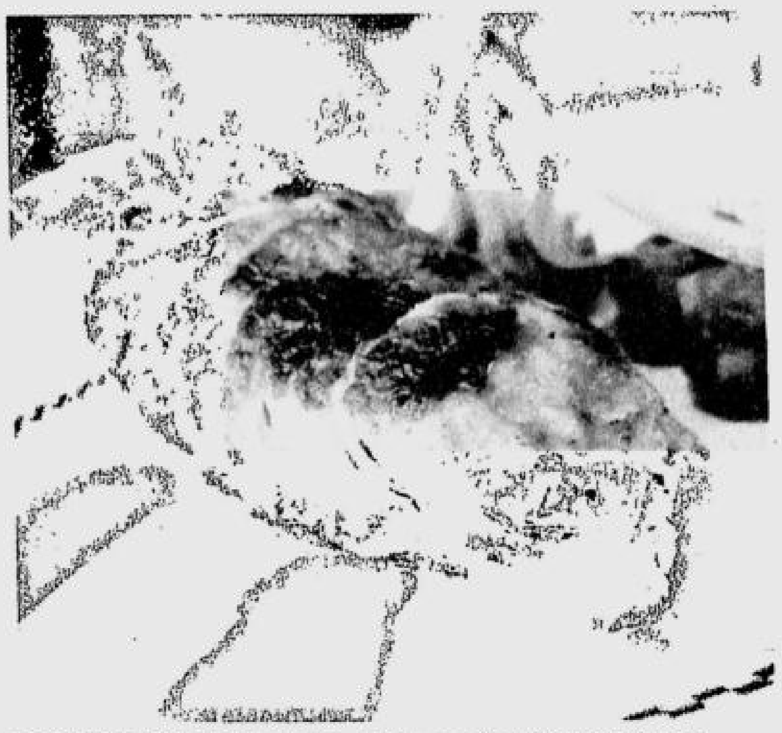
DUSIT Hotel Nikko presents Thailand's most popular festival, the "Luoy Krathong," a tradition wherein local Thai folks thank the goddess of water by offering candle-lit and lotus-shaped vessels made of banana leaves to float and drift away on rivers during the full full moon of November. Benjarong's chef Tun prepared five dishes utilizing traditional Thai cooking techniques, available for lunch and dinner, Nov. 15-23. Call 8673333.

LITTLE Asia's Japanese Beef Rolls

HYATT Regency Manila's Café Al Fresco offers All-American Thanksgiving Buffet Dinner by Hyatt's award-winning chefs from Nov. 14-25. The dinner buffet will be packed with such heart-warming delights as creamy New England Clam Chowder made from fat, juicy clams, freshly homemade pumpkin soup, all-American potato salad, American beef burgers and frankfurters, and traditional Thanksgiving desserts like freshly baked pies, homemade ice creams and New York cheesecake. The café will concoct a special giant roasted Butterball turkey with all the special trimmings and stuffing baked to golden perfection. Call 8331234 loc. 8060.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Rotisserie offers set menu: Ambrosia Salad with Crispy Prawn bits and Sweet Potato Cream Soup with Smoked Salmon Toast for appetizers; Herb Roasted Turkey with Potato Casserole and Steamed Lemon Garlic Broccoli and Cranberry Relish for main dish; and Pumpkin Cheesecake and pralines for desserts. For buffet spread, Manila Pavilion is adding a special Thanksgiving feature, a turkey carving. The Thanksgiving treats are available, Nov. 21-26. Call 5261212 loc. 2505.

AYALA Land Inc. and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) International present Savour Nature '05, a month-long environmental awareness and fund-raising campaign in Greenbelt. One of the highlights of the event is a food festival on Nov. 23, 7-9 p.m., at Greenbelt 3 Park. For only P350, guests can take part in a full feast of delectable dishes, buffet-style, prepared by selected restaurants in Greenbelt 3 and 4. Featured dishes include The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf's Banana Molasses Cake, Sugi's Spicy Sushi Roll, Casa Armas' Croquetas de Pollo and MyLK's Tuna Skewers on Organic Rice. The event is co-presented with Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Lifestyle Network, Technomarine, Cebu Pacific and HSBC, among others. Call 9207931/7923.



MANILA DIAMOND Hotel's Le Bellevue offers Chicken Breast stuffed with wild rice, mangoes, mozzarella and blue cheese topped with rich tomato sauce and exotic saffron. Le Bellevue Chicken Breast is available only for dinner. Call 5283000.

Nothing is being done about spam

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

IN SPITE OF THE ASSURANCE OF OUR Internet-service provider that it is doing its best to block unwanted mails or spams, our e-mail inbox still gets its daily fill of junk stuff, mostly irritant ads. Many of these are health supplement products and sex-related offers, as well as investment scams.

I wish there is someone out there who is techno-savvy enough to sort out the junk from the good stuff, the same way Internet's Yahoo and Hotmail handle the spams of their subscribers' e-mail. Although a few spams manage to filter in, a big percentage of the unwanted mails are automatically diverted to the junk-mail-folder. All you need to do is empty the folder and *voila*, your e-mail space is no longer jammed with irritants.

Well, we can hope, at least. As the experts advised, our best defense is not to open any of these spams and delete them as they come. We are also advised not to buy what the spammers are trying to sell. For one thing, buying from these senders encourage them to keep on spamming.

New Pinoy inventions at Philtrade

An interesting highlight of this year's national inventors' week is an exposition and fair at the Philippine Trade Training Center at Roxas Blvd.

The special features of the event, which runs Nov. 17-21, are energy-related inventions and innovations. Filipino-made products will also be on sale at the commercial section.

In addition to the exhibit, the organizer has set up a program to link up the inventors with investors and exporters. For more information, call Nilo Sta. Agueda at the Technology Application and Promotion Institute of the Department of Science and Technology at 8381127 and 8376153.

Praises to the good guys

We received the following message from a concerned citizen of Barangay Onse, San Juan, Metro Manila:

"We commend the prompt action of the San Juan Police radio dispatch operators (7242515) who responded to our plea for police assistance last Nov. 12 and 13. We reported the public disturbance caused by videoke-happy people at the corner of Panganiban and San Luis streets. The noise pollution disrupted the peace and quiet of the neighborhood until way past midnight. And to think that there is a municipal ordinance against public nuisance in San Juan."

Retired government official Lydia Tansinsin forwarded to us this e-mail: "Beware of fake census-takers who are actually feelers for robbers. They knock on your door and ask how many occupants there are in the house. When they find out the house is not occupied, they mark your door with chalk-written codes like WT to mean "*walang tao*" and WMO meaning "maid only." A house in SSS Village, Marikina, was recently robbed of valuables and furnishings!"

Call to reform ATM service

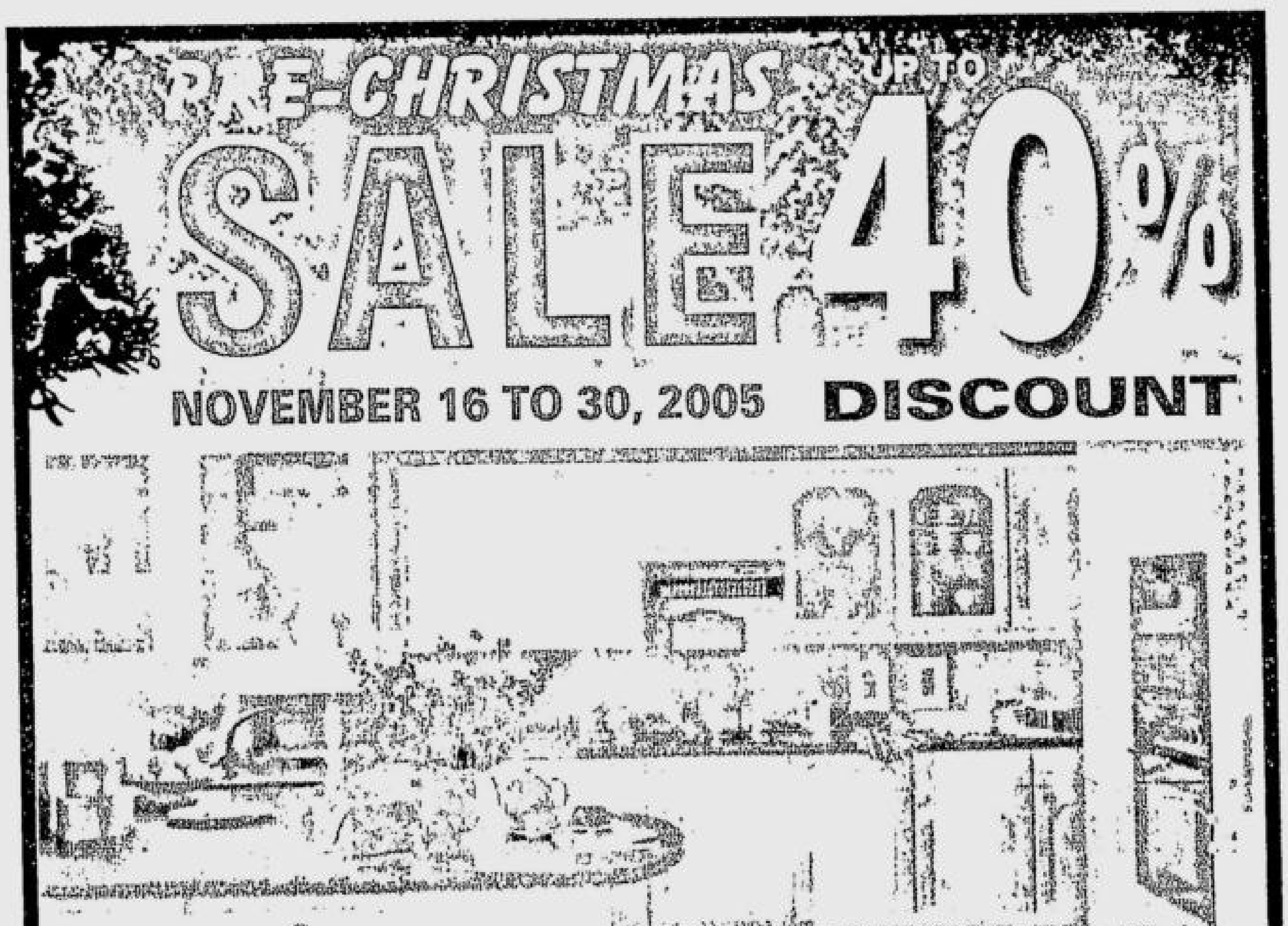
As we expected, readers sent us feedback on our item last week about the grievances of ATM depositors. They shared their own experiences and complaint, from errors on transaction slips and offline inconvenience to machines that capture ATM cards.

In last week's column, we cited the personal crusade of reader Doy Valbuena to improve the ATM system. He said his own experience has spurred him to take action.

For a start, he is conducting a survey of ATM users' complaints and suggestions. And to make it official, he is calling on ATM users to fill up the survey form he drafted (available at his e-mail address doyval@yahoo.com.ph) and send it back to him.

Valbuena sent us the following update on his crusade: "Because of your column, a friend of mine called me up to help out. I was (also) interviewed live on radio DZRH. Furthermore, Atty. Ben Cariaga, president of the Davao Chamber of Commerce and Industry, suggested we elevate this to the national level of consciousness and create a critical mass of people who have the same or similar problems with our ATM system, so that lawmakers may take notice and call for an investigation in aid of legislation. A lawyer also accepted my request for help, pro bono."

PAUL MASSON
California's Best Value Wine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In the style of a Belgian chef

The Belgian Food Festival is ongoing at the Mandarin Oriental until Nov. 20

By Michaela Fenix

HOW NICE THAT WE CAN try the cooking of the world's best chefs when they become part of festivals here. At the Tivoli of the Mandarin Oriental in Makati this week is chef Jean-Francois Begon who is presiding over the Belgian Food Festival, one of several events in celebration of 175 years of Belgium's independence.

Begon is a multiawarded chef, having been named Top Chef of Belgium at the Prosper Montagne 2002, Best Culinary Artist of Belgium in 2003, and first prize at the grand finals of Benelux Taittinger 2002 and 2004. He trained with Michelin stars chefs Pierre Romeyer and Jean-Pierre Bruneau. Best of all, his restaurant, La Bergamote, has been listed in major food guides such as the Michelin and the GaultMillau.

The first dish alone showed his talent and training. His chilled lobster salad with smoked milk foam and balsamico balanced the different flavors so perfectly. Both the taste and presentation were so refined, nothing too much or overboard. It's a lesson in restraint for many of our young chefs. It was light and just the right size for an appetizer. The menu said the salad was in the style of Liège, a province in Belgium where the original recipe is similar to a potato salad with bacon, haricot verts and vinegar.

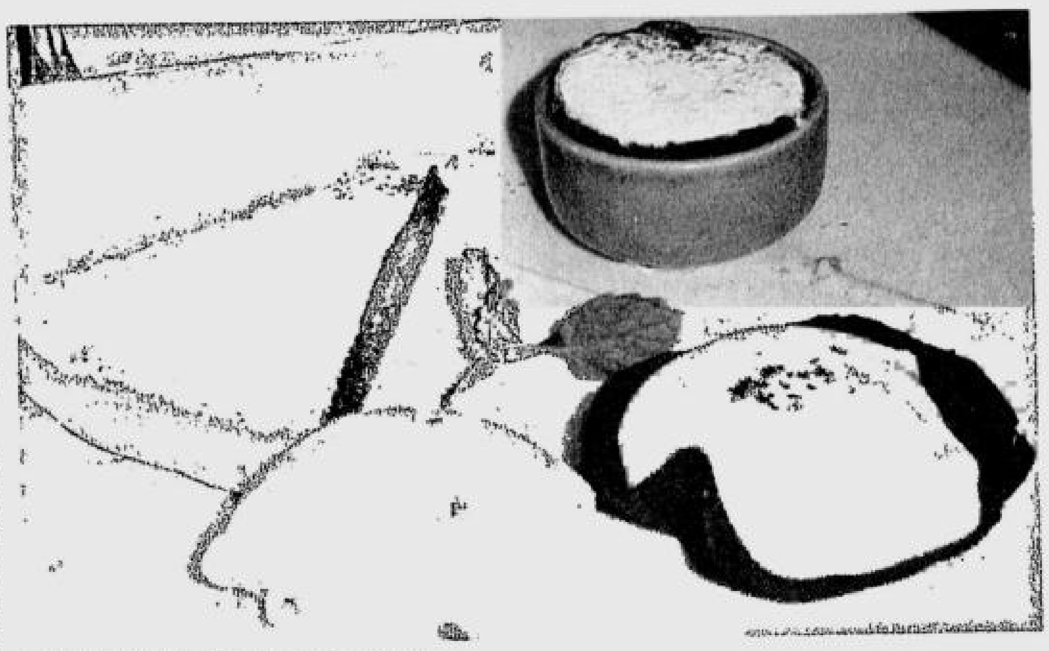
It seems that in Belgium, there is a definite "style" of cooking. The soup course, for instance, was a quenelle of poultry in "waterzoïe," the term explained by Belgian ambassador Grégoire Valdakis as "in the style of Ghent," one of the oldest cities and historical capital of Flanders.

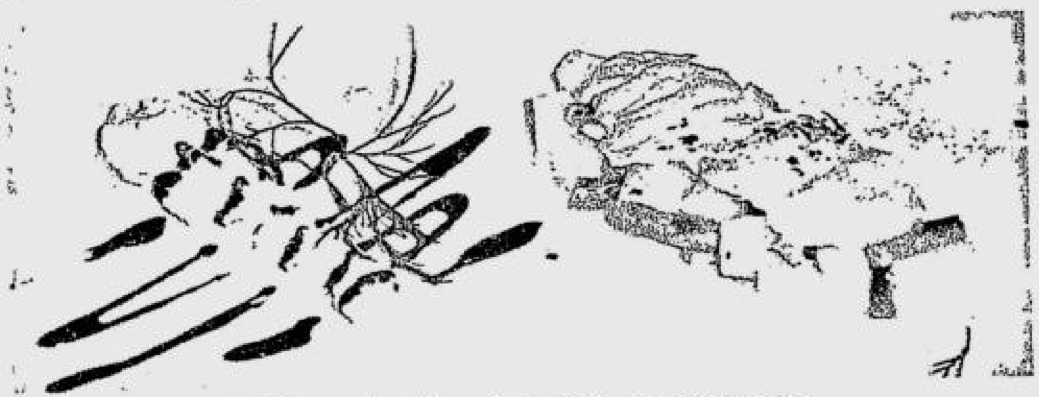
There were three main course choices. Everyone seemed to want the cod that was served on mashed potatoes with a sauce of spiced tomato butter. Not only did the chef know how to balance his flavors; he also knew how to mix his textures. The soft cod had a bit of crunch on top because of the browned breadcrumbs.

The scallops had a chicken foam (was this an influence of Spanish techno-chef Ferran Adria?) and included vegetables of cabbage and Belgian endives.

Chef Begon showed a delicate touch with seafood and we wondered if the same could be true of the pan-fried chicken breast of the deer loin or pheasant that is done in two styles: breast stuffed with duck liver or grilled thigh with herb salad and marinated with red currants.

Our dessert displayed the best of world-renowned Belgian chocolates, the main ingredient produced in the country's former colonies. The chef said the collection used different grades of chocolates but you should note that the highest grade was the *moelleux au chocolat*. Think dark chocolate molten lava.


A SELECTION of Belgian chocolates


CHILLED lobster salad Liege-style with smoked milk foam and balsamico

MULTIAWARDED chef Jean-Francois Begon of Belgium

Melt-in-your-mouth yema balls

By James Anthony R. Ceniza

CHRISTMAS IS NEVER COMPLETE without *yema* balls on our table that our guests usually take home as Christmas souvenirs. My mother, Adoracion, spent many an afternoon as a child watching her friend's mom, Aling Sidang, make *yema* balls. Aling Sidang hails from Sta. Rita, Pampanga, a town known for their *mayumo* or sweets like *yema*, *turrones de casuy* and sans rival.

Since she was a teenager, my mother has been making *yema* balls from Aling Sidang's recipe. The balls are coated with caramelized sugar, but this *yema* is distinct from others that come from other regions because of a secret ingredient that gives it a different flavor. Well, since I'm sharing it now, it is no secret anymore. That ingredient is the zest of *dayap*, or what the Kapampangan call *dalayap*.

Yema Balls

Yema

1 300-ml can sweetened condensed milk

10 egg yolks

4 tbsp butter

Zest of 2 *dayap* (scraped or grated with the help of a citrus zester or vegetable peeler)

In a double boiler, heat water in the bottom pan. Mix the butter, condensed milk, egg yolk and *dayap* zest in the upper pan. Cook over moderate heat until thick in consistency but not boiling. Let the mixture cool and then form into balls. (If you do not have a double-boiler, you can use a heavy pan as long as you stir the milk continuously so as not to burn the custard.)

Caramel

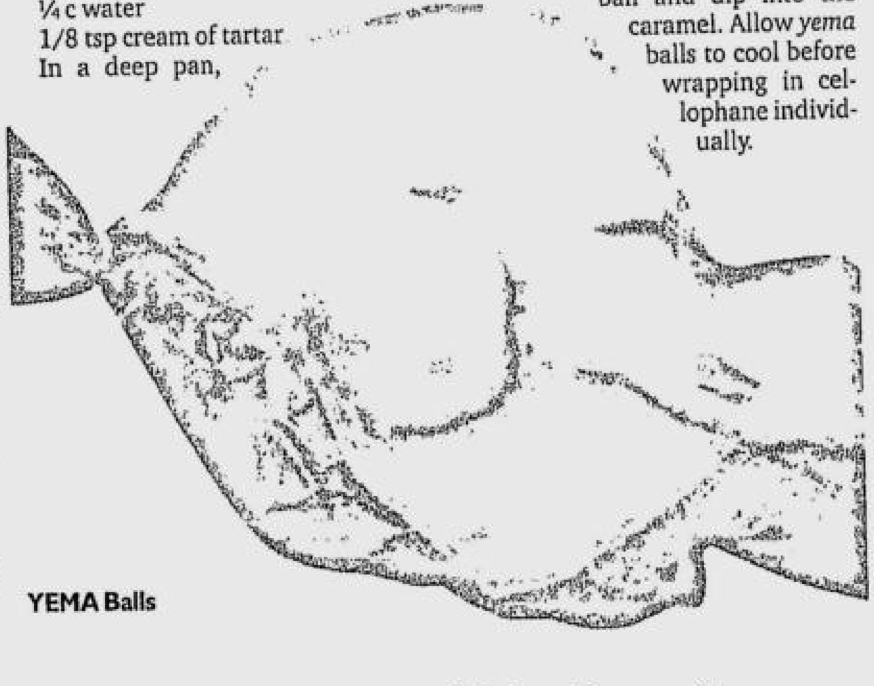
1 c sugar

¼ c water

1/8 tsp cream of tartar

In a deep pan, mix together sugar, water, and cream of tartar. Bring to a quick boil until golden in color. Take out caramel from heat.

Stick a toothpick into each *yema* ball and dip into the caramel. Allow *yema* balls to cool before wrapping in cellophane individually.


YEMA Balls

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LIFESTYLE IS LOOKING FOR recipes that use traditional Filipino techniques and ingredients.

Send us your family recipes and, if your entry is chosen, you can win P2,000 worth of SM Supermarket gift checks, an Imarflex gift or a class at the Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts.

Tell us who in your family first cooked the recipe; how many generations have cooked it; when it is usually cooked and served. Write your name, address, phone numbers and e-mail address, if any, at the bottom of the recipe.

Include a **photo of the dish.** Please do not send us your photo.

Mail or deliver your entry to PDI Family Recipes Contest, c/o Lifestyle, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1098 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City 1263. Or e-mail to **recipes@inquirer.com.ph**. For details, e-mail lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. Winners may claim prizes from the PDI marketing office.

Cooking with Lola

From page C1

Naval) had extensive fish farms.

It was in my *lola*'s hometown of Balanga, Bataan, where my other early country cooking experience happened. This citified girl spent one summer, one fiesta and an aunt's wedding in the house of my *lola*'s brother, *Tio* Toning. At the house extension at the back, I witnessed the preparation for the fiesta and the wedding.

They called that place the dirty kitchen and I thought the name logical at the time because it was sooty and dark. There I watched with fascination how food was cooked in both clay and heavy pots. The only time the place was illuminated was when the cook blew through a bamboo tube into the embers, coaxing more heat from the pieces of wood used as fuel.

This urban girl grew up witnessing and tasting country cooking. Work and plain curiosity have brought me all over these islands, as far north as Batanes and as far south as Tawi-tawi.

From my *lola*'s kitchen, other kitchens have been opened up to me and culinary secrets have been revealed. It is a privilege and a pleasure to be writing about these here.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

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Studied in 6 cooking schools in Hongkong

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Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

NOV 17 THURS 2:30 - 6:00PM - MERIENDA FARE, DELICIOUS PANCIT PALABOK. LUMPIANG UBOD W/ HOMEMADE EGG WRAPPER, FRIED WANTON WITH SWEET AND SOUR SAUCE. MAGNOLIA HOMEMADE UBE WRAPPER FOR LUMPIA, FRIED LUMPIANG SHANGHAI, MINI FRUITCAKE BARS, SARAP BAKED COCOROONS P1,800. BY SYLVIA

NOV 19 - SAT - 1:00 - 4:30PM - FREE COOKING AND BAKING DEMO BY MORELLA, ERNEST, SYLVIA AT THE SAN MIGUEL HEAD OFFICE CAFETERIA, SAN MIGUEL AVENUE, MANDALUYONG. (ENTRANCE ACROSS SM MEGAMALL). JUST BRING ANY 3 WRAPPERS OF MAGNOLIA CHICKEN, MONTEREY OR MAGNOLIA DAIRY PRODUCTS.

NOV 21 MON - 2:30 - 6:15PM - MULTILAYERED, FLAKIEST CROISSANTS, PUFF PASTRY MEAT FILLED TURN OVERS, ASSORTED GLAZED DANISH PASTRIES. P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 22 TUES - 2:30 - 6:00PM BEST SELLER OVEN-BAKED CHICKEN PIES IN MUFFINCUPS: FLAKY EMPANADA, MELTS-IN-THE-MOUTH MAMON, MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER SLICES PUTOPAO BONUS RECIPES OF MACAROONS, PUTO FLOUR & TRI-COLORED PUTO P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 23 WED 2:30 -6:00PM - THE LATEST MONEY MAKING HOTEL & BAKESHOP BESTSELLERS! CHOCO LAVA CAKES (CHOCO CENTERS WILL OOZE OUT), "TARTUFO" (ITALIAN DOME CHOCOLATE COVERED ICE CREAM CAKE WITH CHOCO CAKE BASE - CAN BE FROZEN FOR A MONTH OR MORE); CREAM PUFFS WITH BAVARIAN & CHOCO FILLING WITH 2 GLAZES, THE YUMMIEST OF NEW YORK RESTAURANT SCHOOL CHEF INSTRUCTRESS LORRIE REYNOSO'S BAKED CHEESE CAKE. P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 24 THURS 2:30 - 6:00PM - SOFTEST DOUGNUTS FOR BUSINESS! NO OVEN NOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED INCLUDES CHOCOLATE AND MARBLED DOUGHNUTS WITH SEVERAL FILLINGS, ICING, DIPS PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF THICK SPANISH CHOCOLATE AND CHURROS. P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 25 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM - UBE CHIFFON CAKE; ROCKY ROAD. MOIST CHOCOLATE CAKE FOOD FOR THE GODS AND WALNUT BROWNIES PLUS TIPS ON CONVERTING CAKES INTO JELLY ROLLS AND MUFFINS. DELICIOUS CAKES SOLD IN TOP BAKESHOPS! ALL CAKES WITH DIFFERENT ICINGS! P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 26 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM REYNOSO - GALA & ARAULLO KAKANIN! MELTS IN THE MOUTH SPECIAL RICE BIBINGKA, SAPIN SAPIN ESPESYAL DELICIOUS. EASY TO MAKE RICE SUMAN. HOMEMADE HOPIA WITH MONGO OR UBE FILLING BONUS RECIPE APONG METYANG'S CASSAVA CAKE. P1,800. BY MORELLA

NOV 27 SUN 2:30 - 6:00PM MONEY MAKING FAST FOOD CART SPECIALTIES BY MORELLA. DELICIOUS CORN DOGS, WAFFLE WITH HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE / CARAMEL. NACHOS "TOPOTOS" WITH MONTEREY MEAT FILLING AND CHEESE DIP. HOMEMADE SHAWARMA WRAP WITH BEEF FILLING AND CHEESE DIP P1,800.

NOV 28 MON 2:30 - 5:30PM - MONEY MAKING FAST FOOD RECIPES! YUMMY CHICKEN INASAL, S & R STYLE HERBED ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN, CAJUN BURGERS WITH SPECIAL SAUCE, SPICY MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BURGERS. BAKED POTATO CHIP MAGNOLIA CHICKEN BREASTS WITH PESTO LINGUINNE P1,800. BY ERNEST

NOV 29 TUE 2:30 - 5:00PM - POPULAR CAFE FAVORITES! BEST EVER CARROT & WALNUT CAKE W/ CREAM CHEESE FROSTING. TEXAS-STYLE CORN MUFFINS. STREUSEL-TOPPED MUFFINS. BLUEBERRY CRUMB-TOPPED MUFFINS IDEAL FOR HOME BUSINESS. P1,800. BY ERNEST

NOV 30 WED 2:30 - 5:30PM - DELICIOUS RESTAURANT SPECIALTIES YOU WILL LOVE TO DO AT HOME! · GARLIC · ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN WITH PEPPER CHICKEN WITH PEPPER STEAK SAUCE. MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN CUBES SALPICADO. FETTUCINE WITH 3 DIFFERENT SAUCES PESTO (GARLIC BASIL), BLACK SQUID INK, CREAMY MAYO CHEESE HIGHLANDS SALAD WITH OLIVES AND BLUE CHEESE DRESSINGS HOT CARAMEL BANANA FUDGE BROWNIE PIE WITH CREAM PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF CENTURY TUNA BURGERS, BEEF BURGERS WITH DIFFERENT DRESSINGS P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 1 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR! LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES MOZARE' LE-TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA (BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN), THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFFERENT TOPPINGS, FETTICINE ALFREDO, SPAGHETTI CARBONARA, BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON PEACH-FILLED CREPES W/ FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS & SANDWICHES P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 2 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM PUT UP A STEAKHOUSE. LEARN THE TECHNIQUES TO COOKING THE JUICIEST MONTEREY PORTERHOUSE STEAKS BEEF TENDERLOIN STEAK ALA POBRE. DELICIOUS HOMEMADE GRAVY, CAESAR SALAD, ROAST ORANGE PORKLOIN, BEST-SELLING BAKED SPAGHETTI W/ 2 SAUCES MAKE YOUR OWN CREPES SAMURAI P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 3 SAT 2:30 - 6:15PM - LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESE ROLLS, SPECIAL EGG PAN DE SAL, PAN DE SAL W/ FILLING CINNAMON ROLLS BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! P1,800. BY SYLVIA

DEC 4 SUN 2:30 - 6:00PM - 9 SPECIAL BARBECUE; BEEF TERIYAKI IN SKEWERS; PORK SPARERIBS W/ HOISIN SAUCE. MAGNOLIA CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS IN HONEY SAUCE. (SATE A JAM) CHICKEN SKEWERS IN PEANUT SAUCE, BEEF RIBS W/ PEKING NOODLES, DELICIOUS PORK SPARE RIBS, NEW KOREAN BEEF BARBECUE, NASIGORENG (INDONESIAN FRIED RICE), FERNANDO MIGUEL ERENETA'S CHICKEN HONEY; THE BEST PORK BARBECUE W/ SPECIAL PEANUT SAUCE P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 6 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - 2 KINDS OF ROASTBEEF - MONTEREY STANDING RIB ROAST AND BACON-WRAPPED BONELESS ROAST W/ GRAVY, CREMA DE FRUTA, SIZZLING SHRIMPS IN GARLIC SAUCE, FRIED SQUID RINGS, CHICKEN ALEXANDER, SEAFOOD MEDLEY SOUP SERVED ON CRUSTY BREAD BOWL FROM FRENCH BAKER P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 7 WED 2:30 - 6:00PM MAX'S STYLE FRIED CHICKEN - JOLLIBEE STYLE CHICKEN W/ GRAVY, CHICKEN BURGER, DELICIOUS POTATO SALAD, SIZZLING GRILLED PORKCHOPS, FOUR SEASONS PUNCH, RIPE MANGO JUICE; MELON TAPIOCA W/ SAGO, GREEN MANGO JUICE P1,800. BY SYLVIA

DEC 8 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - THE BEST OVEN-BAKED PAELLA ROAST-STUFFED MAGNOLIA JUMBO CHICKEN, PASTEL DE LENGUA, CALLOS MADRILEÑA, BLACK FOREST #2 IDEAL FOR CATERERS & PARTY GIVERS. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

DEC 9 FRI 2:30 - 5:30PM - THE YUMMIEST MEAT LOAF W/ GRAVY; CASA ARMAS STYLE GARLIC ROASTED MAGNOLIA CHICKEN W/ BABY POTATOES (POLLO IBERICO), OUR BEST HAM MACARONI SALAD, STEAMED, THEN DEBONED LAPULAPU SALAD, GOOD OLD AMERICAN APPLE PIE P1,800. BY SYLVIA

DEC 10 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - SUPPLY COFFEE SHOPS & CANTEENS W/ 9 BEST-SELLERS! CHEWY CHOCO MALLOW BARS, LEBANESE DATE BOAT TARTS, LENGUA DE GATO, SPECIAL POLVORON, CHOCO CRINKLES, BUTTERSCOTCH BROWNIES, DATE WALNUT COOKIES, RUSSIAN TEA COOKIES, YUMMY CHOCO CHIP COOKIES. P1,800. BY ERNEST

DEC 11 SUN 2:30 - 6:15PM - LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER! THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI, KUA PAO (PEKING SIOPAO W/ MEAT FILLING & PICKLED MUSTASA) FISH HEAD SOUP CAMARON RELLENADO, QUIKIAM W/ RADISH SALAD STEAMED LAPU-LAPU P1,800. BY SYLVIA

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WINNING RECIPE:
Yema Balls
PDI FAMILY RECIPES CONTEST
/C4

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Text us your feedback:
Inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

In time for Christmas, treats as gifts

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

AS PROMISED, here are more of Jonathon Ashmore's recipes, including his fruit cake recipe as requested by Grace See.

Coconut Macaroons

1 c Sweetened Coconut Cream—coconut milk first extraction plus 1/3 c sugar, simmer until slightly thickened, measure 1 c, cool before using

4 large egg whites

2 tsp vanilla extract

½ tsp salt

6 c sweetened shredded coconut + 1 c powdered sugar, toss and bake on a cookie sheet 350°F until slightly toasted. Cool before using

Preheat oven 375°F.

Line cookie sheet with parchment paper and lightly grease.

Whisk first four ingredients until completely blended.

Add coconut, mixing until coconut is evenly moistened.

Chill for 15 minutes.

Drop heaping tablespoons of batter onto lined cookie sheets, setting them at least 1 inch apart.

Form cookies into loose haystacks with fingertips. Moisten fingers with water as necessary to prevent sticking.

Bake until light golden brown, 15 minutes.

Cool on cookie sheet for five minutes to set. Finish cooling in wire rack.

Macaroons can be given a more festive finish by dipping them in melted semi-sweet chocolate.

Chocolate Coconut Bars

½ c butter

1½ c graham cracker crumbs

1½ c semi-sweet chocolate chips

1 c walnuts, chopped

1½ c shredded sweetened coconut

1 can 14-oz sweetened condensed milk

Melt butter and spread evenly on a 9" x 13" baking pan.

Evenly spread graham cracker meal over butter.

Mix chocolate chips and nuts and sprinkle evenly over crumbs.

Sprinkle coconut evenly over chocolate chip/nut mixture.

Evenly pour condensed milk over coconut.

Bake at 325°F until golden brown.

Cool and cut into 1½-inch squares.

Note: You can add or substitute any number of ingredients to make this recipe your own. For example, you can use both white and dark chocolate chips, add raisins or other dried fruits, etc.

Fruitcake

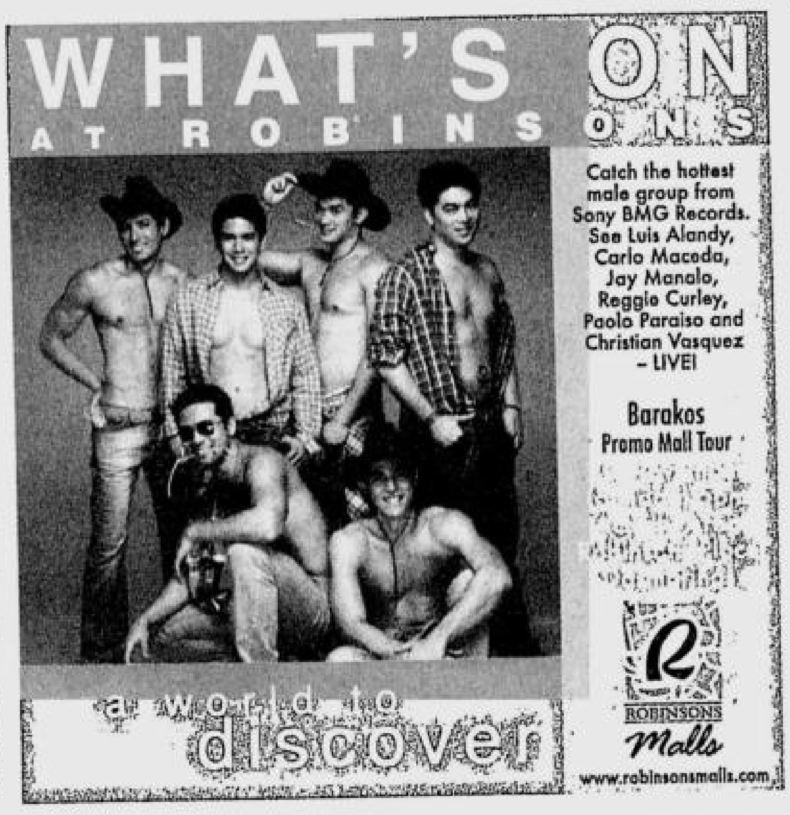
This fruitcake recipe has evolved significantly over the past 50 years. The original recipe was my mother's creation and reflected my father's love of cherries, blueberries and pecans. Those were the only ingredients she added to the basic cake batter.

This recipe has become one of my favorites for several reasons. First of all, my family loves it. Also, the recipe is loaded with my favorite fruits and does not contain citron, which is a major component of most commercial fruitcakes. And lastly, the recipe can be easily modified to suit your own particular taste preferences.

Although you may serve this cake immediately after it has cooled, it is one of the few cakes that improve with aging. The procedure for aging is described fol-

IN TIME/ D3

HOLIDAY FRUITCAKE



WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS
Catch the hottest male group from Sony BMG Records. See Luis Alandy, Carlo Maceda, Jay Manalo, Reggie Curley, Paolo Paraiso and Christian Vasquez – LIVE!
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Promo Mall Tour
a world to discover
ROBINSONS Malls
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Let the season's cheer flow with Novellino wines. Bold, refreshing flavors. Rich, sparkling textures. The holidays have never tasted so good.

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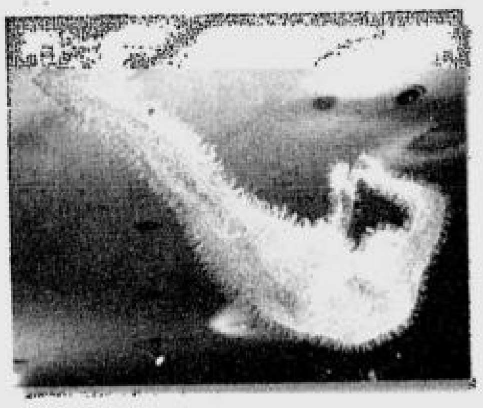
presents
Lifestyle in MOTION 2005



VISUAL ARTISTS
GABRIEL BARREDO
YVONNE QUISUMBING-ROMULO
ROM VILLASERAN • JUAN CAGUICLA

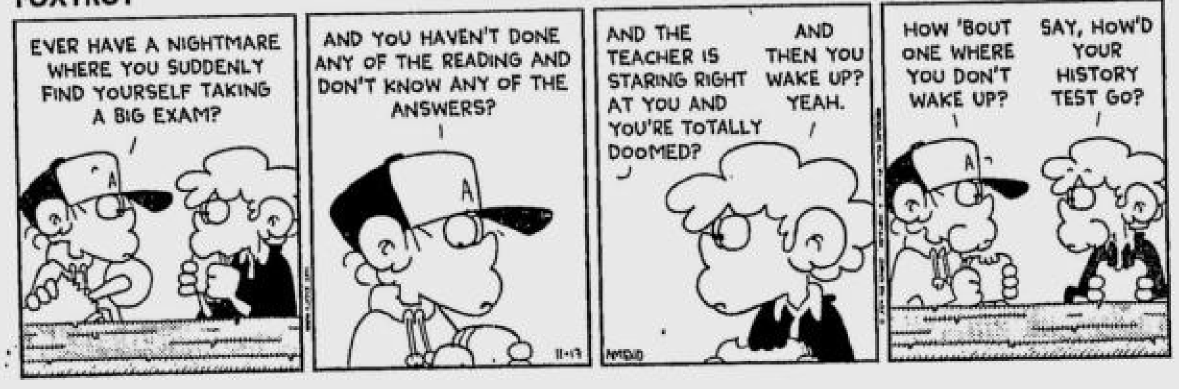
CELEBRITY LIFESTYLE SHOWCASE
by LRI Interior Designers
ALICE ERFE and LYNETTE NGO
MAYA PADIERNOS and DERRICK DANDAN
PAOLO and SARAH CASTILLO
NINA SANTAMARIA and MAHAL AMANDA ADAMS
TARA DOMINGO and PAM AGABIN
DOTTIE LABAO and ODETTE SALVA

A PHOTO EXHIBIT OF
CELEBRITIES READING
by MANDY NAVASERO
November 17 - December 8 • Open from 10 am - 7 pm
LRI Business Plaza 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (Reposo)
Bel-Air II Makati City 895-1772, 895-5470

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
ComicRelief
e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2005

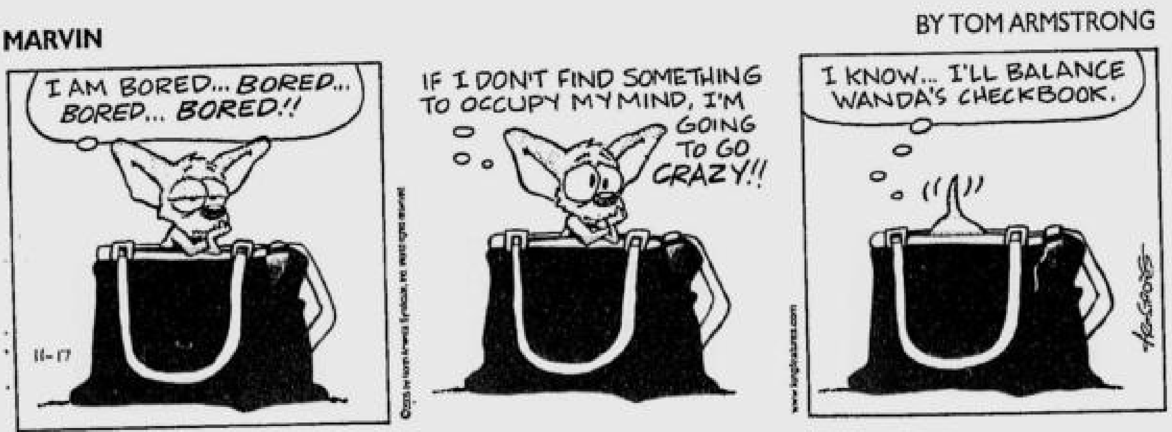
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


EVER HAVE A NIGHTMARE WHERE YOU SUDDENLY FIND YOURSELF TAKING A BIG EXAM?
AND YOU HAVEN'T DONE ANY OF THE READING AND DON'T KNOW ANY OF THE ANSWERS?
AND THE TEACHER IS STARING RIGHT AT YOU AND YOU'RE TOTALLY DOOMED?
AND THEN YOU WAKE UP? YEAH.
HOW 'BOUT ONE WHERE YOU DON'T WAKE UP?
SAY, HOW'D YOUR HISTORY TEST GO?
11-17

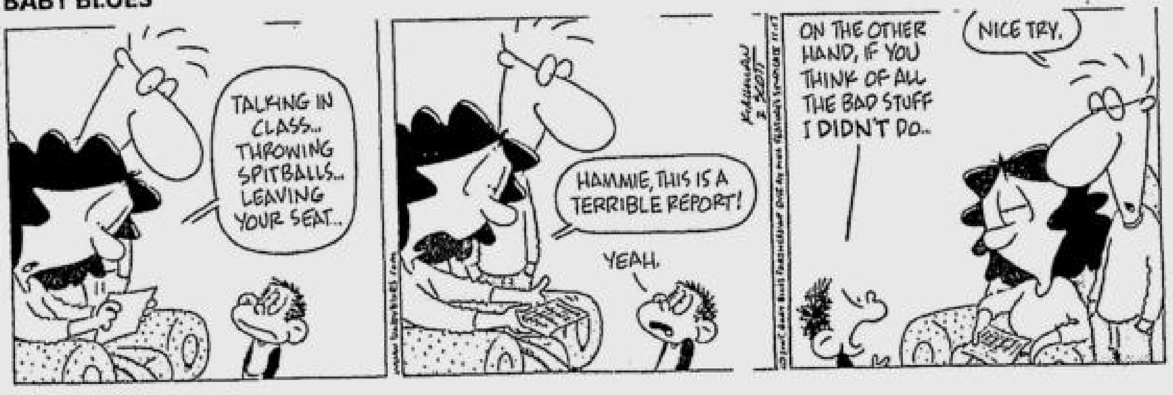
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I AM BORED... BORED... BORED... BORED!!
IF I DON'T FIND SOMETHING TO OCCUPY MY MIND, I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY!!
I KNOW... I'LL BALANCE WANDA'S CHECKBOOK.
11-17

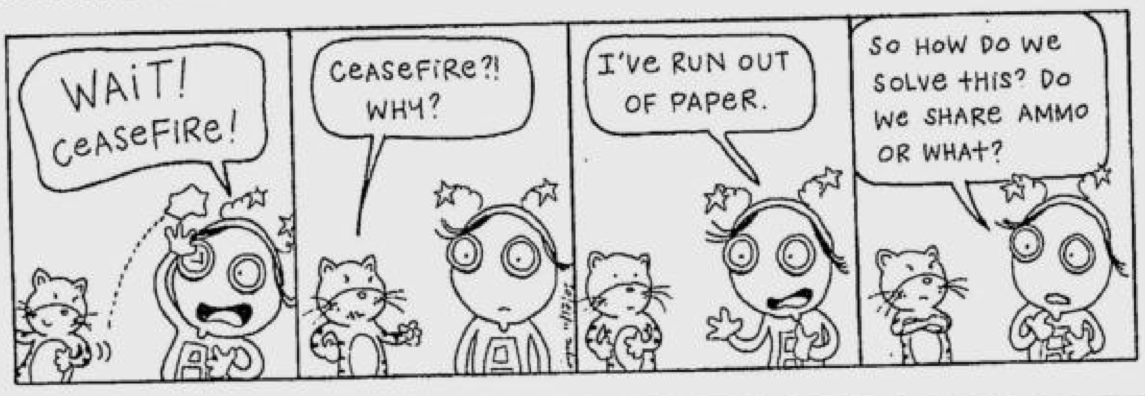
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


TALKING IN CLASS... THROWING SPITBALLS... LEAVING YOUR SEAT...
HAMMIE, THIS IS A TERRIBLE REPORT!
YEAH.
ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU THINK OF ALL THE BAD STUFF I DIDN'T DO..
NICE TRY.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WAIT! CEASEFIRE!
CEASEFIRE?! WHY?
I'VE RUN OUT OF PAPER.
SO HOW DO WE SOLVE THIS? DO WE SHARE AMMO OR WHAT?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind. You see the subtext of things. You can't be fooled easily. You also have self-discipline and endurance. You love to explore new turf, and this often leads you to have many hobbies. Always trust your instincts. The year ahead could be one of the best years of your life. Be confident. Open any door!
Birthdate of: Tom Seaver, baseball player; Danny DeVito, actor; Martin Scorsese, director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is an excellent day to ask your boss for something you want. Ditto for asking parents, teachers or authority figures for anything you hope to get. It might not work—but this is a great day to try!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Make plans for travel or increased education or training in some way. You'll make great strides today in these areas. Pleasant news from people from afar is also likely.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Gifts, goodies, favors and perks can come your way today. Whoopie! Remember to be generous in return. That's the formula of the universe: If you're generous to others, the universe is generous to you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a wonderful day to deal with others, especially partners and close friends. It's OK to agree to contracts. Agreements and deals that are reached today will probably benefit you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You'll enjoy working with others today. For one thing, co-workers are pleasant and supportive now. You might also do something to make where you work look more attractive.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a marvelous, playful day! You feel prankish, flirtatious and ready for fun! New love will begin for some. Existing relationships will bloom with romance. Enjoy your day!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You like to have pleasant surroundings where you live. This is the perfect day to buy something beautiful to make your home cozier and more welcoming.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is an excellent day for business, commerce and all negotiations. Conversations with siblings and relatives also go very well. You're in the groove.

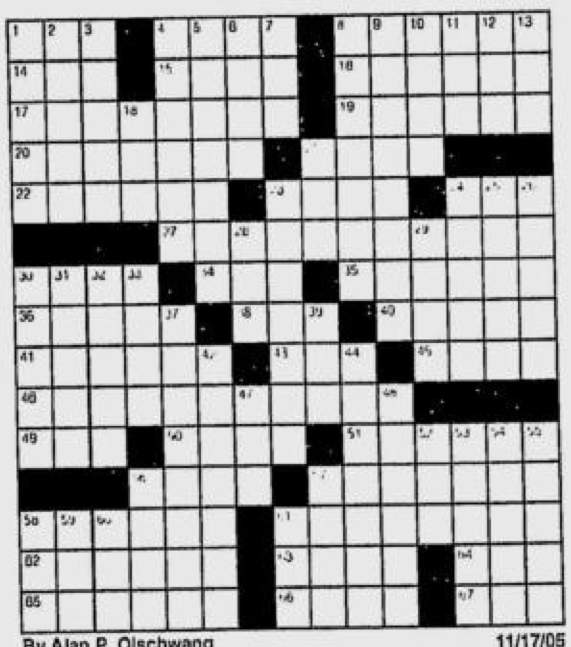
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day for business and making money! You're also spending money. Either way, you're pleased with your cash flow today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're able to assert yourself today in a way that others completely accept. You respect the rights of others, but you're not afraid to ask for what you want.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a pleasant, easygoing day. For that reason, you might enjoy solitude in beautiful surroundings. Moments of peace and quiet will please you now.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a romantic, sexy day! You feel flirtatious and fun-loving. Actually, all relationships are blessed in a pleasant way.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
11/17/05

ACROSS
1 Steer head?
4 "South Park" creator Parker
8 Cream-filled dessert
14 At least one
15 Comfort
16 Denver pro
17 Start of Mark Twain quote
19 Flat broke
20 Rural diversion
21 Editorial directive
22 Forever, poetically
23 Sora of Virginia
24 Expression of triumph
27 Part 2 of quote
30 Drunkard
34 Silly Caesar
35 Accompany
36 Leading
38 Never in Nuremberg
40 Past, present or future
41 Lords of Scotland
43 Qty.
45 Fortuneteller
46 Part 3 of quote
49 Diffident
50 Top-rated
51 Moseyed
56 Type of jacket or collar
57 Hug
58 Acquire background
61 End of quote
62 Whole
63 Auctioneer's last word
64 Blue
65 Kind of line
66 Exploits
67 UFO crew

DOWN
1 Get into hot water?
2 Knock off a derby, e.g.
3 Yeah, sure!
4 Preparing to drive
5 Oakland pros
6 Latin being
7 Truly
8 Righteous Brothers hit
9 Most mean
10 Sort of soul
11 Picnic spoiler
12 Rink material
13 Laver of tennis
18 Grammar-sch. trio
21 Was left idle
23 Emerge in waves
24 Sans company
25 Basketball game
26 Following
28 German article
29 High cards
30 Substructure for plaster
31 Yep
32 Sordid
33 Maui tourist destination
37 Adulterate
39 Ratite bird
42 Pried
44 Stomp
47 Arbor of Michigan
48 Encloses snugly
52 Sib for sis
53 Run out
54 Great brilliance
55 Instruments of title
56 Polish prose
57 Adam's grandson
58 Mars hue
59 Rock producer Brian
60 Crowd fig.
61 Bird's alma mater

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

T	A	L	C	■	C	E	A	S	E	■	A	M	I	D
A	R	I	A	■	A	L	G	O	L	■	B	A	S	E
L	I	M	B	■	R	H	I	N	E	■	E	R	L	E
■	L	E	A	R	N	I	N	G	C	U	R	V	E	S
■	■	■	L	I	I	■	■	S	T	A	R	■	■	■
S	A	I	■	A	V	O	W	■	S	E	A	R	C	H
A	M	I	■	T	A	R	A	S	■	■	N	E	R	O
F	O	R	M	A	L	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N
E	L	E	A	■	■	L	E	M	U	R	■	M	O	E
R	E	D	R	A	W	■	R	O	S	S	■	S	K	Y
■	■	■	T	R	I	S	■	■	P	O	I	■	■	■
S	P	R	I	N	G	T	R	A	I	N	I	N	G	■
A	L	I	A	■	W	E	I	R	D	■	B	O	N	O
L	I	O	N	■	A	N	E	T	O	■	E	L	A	L
T	E	S	S	■	G	O	N	E	R	■	R	O	T	E

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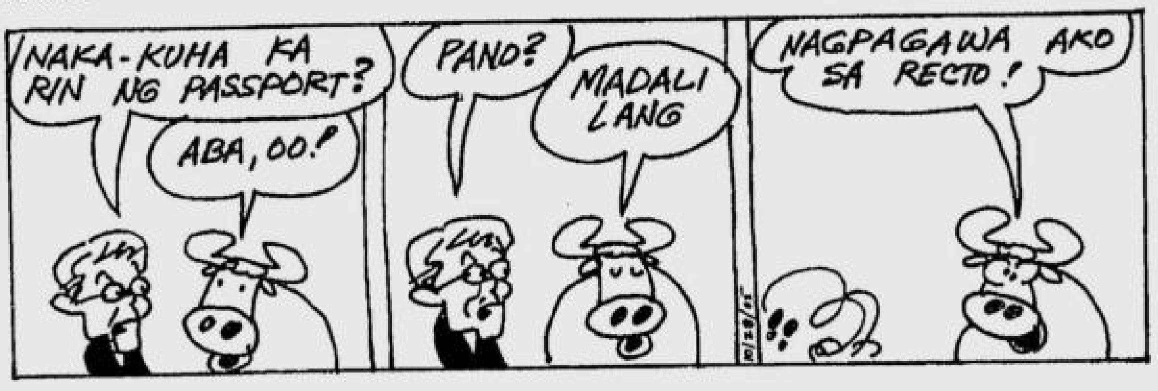
11/17/05

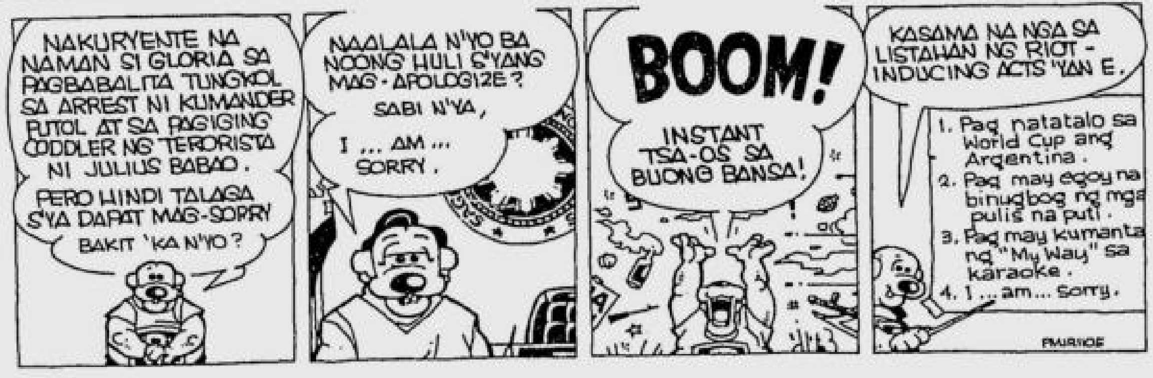
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAKA-KUHA KA RIN NG PASSPORT?
ABA, OO!
PANO?
MADALI LANG
NAGPAGAWA AKO SA RECTO!

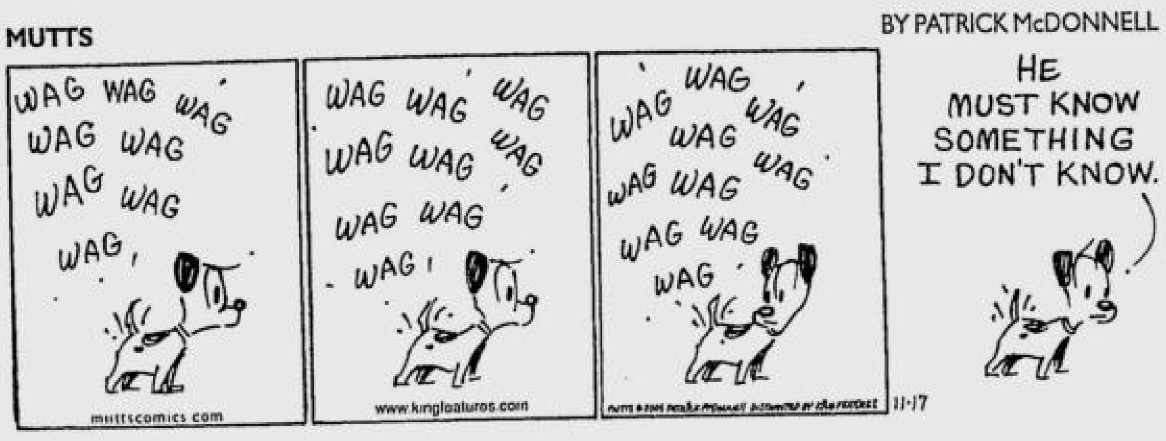
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAKURYENTE NA NAMAN SI GLORIA SA PAGBABALITA TUNGKOL SA ARREST NI KUMANDER PUTOL AT SA PAGIGING CODDLER NG TERORISTA NI JULIUS BABAO.
PERO HINDI TALAGA S'YA DAPAT MAG-SORRY
BAKIT 'KA N'YO?
NAALALA N'YO BA NOONG HULI S'YANG MAG-APOLOGIZE?
SABI N'YA,
I ... AM ... SORRY.
BOOM!
INSTANT TSA-OS SA BUONG BANSA!
KASAMA NA NGA SA LISTAHAN NG RIOT-INDUCING ACTS 'YAN E.
1. Pag natatalo sa World Cup ang Argentina.
2. Pag may egoy na binugbog ng mga pulis na puti.
3. Pag may kumanta ng "My Way" sa karaoke.
4. I ... am ... Sorry.
PMJR10E

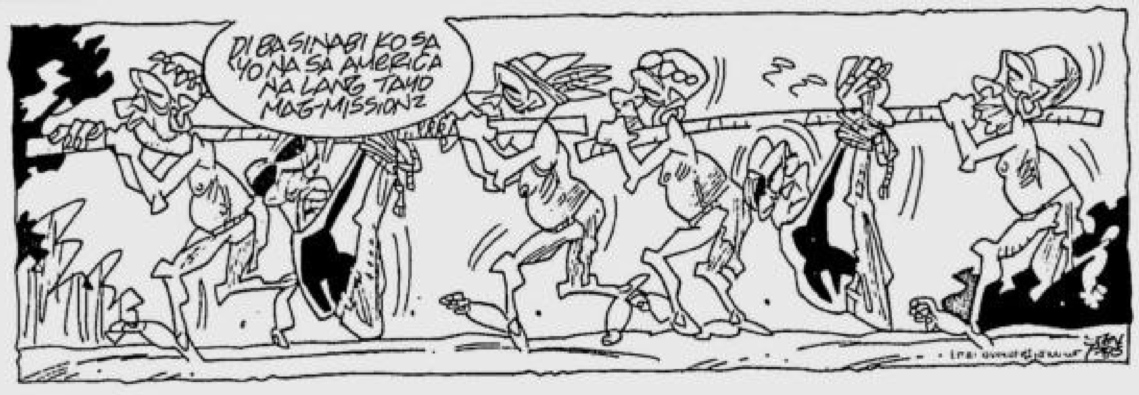
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG
WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG!
WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG WAG
HE MUST KNOW SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW.
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
11-17

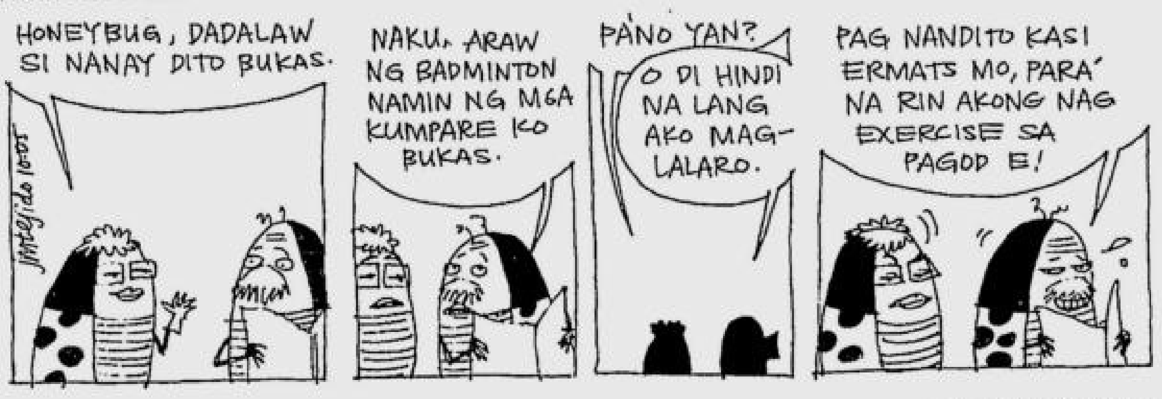
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DI BA SINABI KO SA 'YO NA SA AMERICA NA LANG TAYO MAG-MISSION?

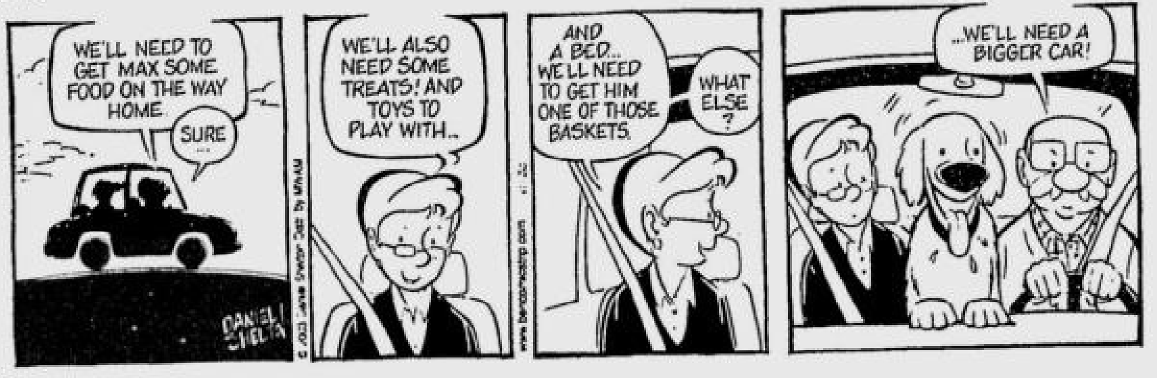
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HONEYBUG, DADALAW SI NANAY DITO BUKAS.
NAKU. ARAW NG BADMINTON NAMIN NG MGA KUMPARE KO BUKAS.
PANO YAN?
O DI HINDI NA LANG AKO MAGLALARO.
PAG NANDITO KASI ERMATS MO, PARA NA RIN AKONG NAG EXERCISE SA PAGOD E!

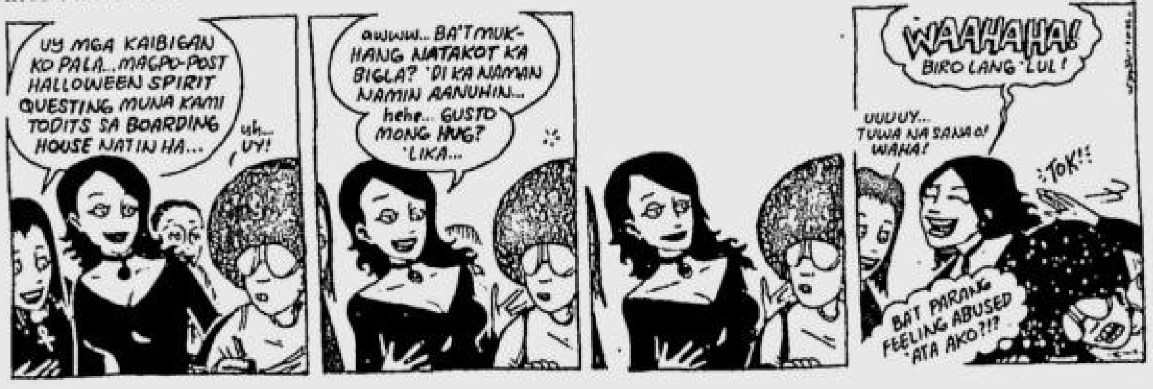
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WE'LL NEED TO GET MAX SOME FOOD ON THE WAY HOME.
SURE...
WE'LL ALSO NEED SOME TREATS! AND TOYS TO PLAY WITH...
AND A BED... WE'LL NEED TO GET HIM ONE OF THOSE BASKETS.
WHAT ELSE?
...WE'LL NEED A BIGGER CAR!

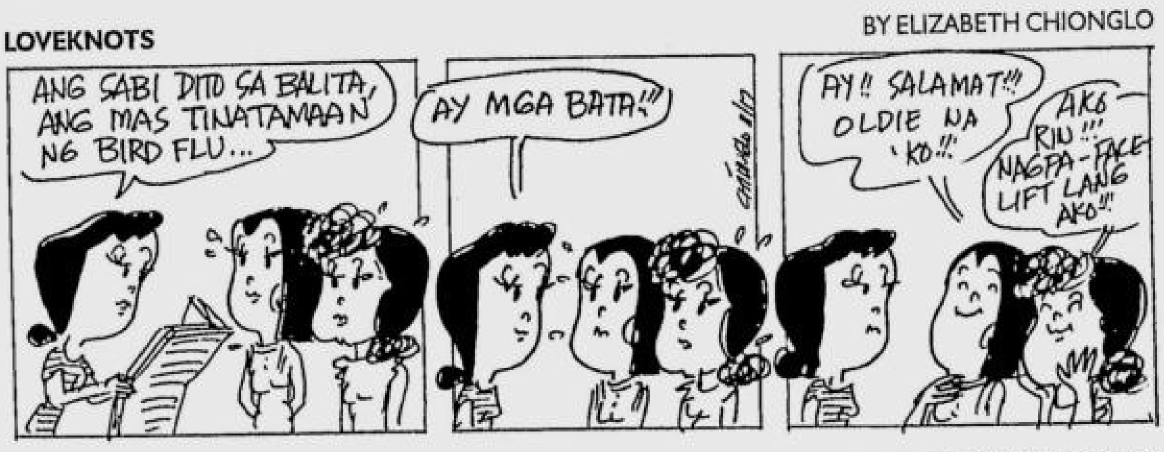
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY MGA KAIBIGAN KO PALA... MAGPO-POST HALLOWEEN SPIRIT QUESTING MUNA KAMI TODITS SA BOARDING HOUSE NATIN HA...
uh... UY!
awww... BA'T MUKHANG NATAKOT KA BIGLA? 'DI KA NAMAN NAMIN AANUHIN... hehe... GUSTO MONG HUG? 'LIKA...
WAAHAHA! BIRO LANG 'LUL!
UUUUY... TUWA NA SANA O! WAHA!
TOK!!
BAT PARANG FEELING ABUSED 'ATA AKO?!?

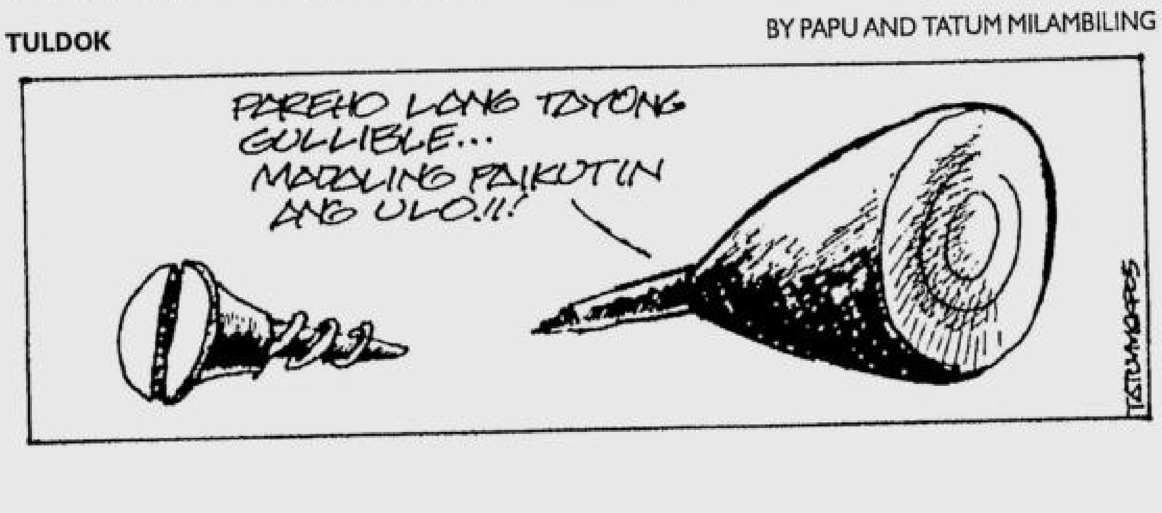
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG SABI DITO SA BALITA, ANG MAS TINATAMAAN NG BIRD FLU...
AY MGA BATA!!!
AY!! SALAMAT!!! OLDIE NA 'KO!!
AKO RIN!!! NAGPA-FACE LIFT LANG AKO!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PAREHO LANG TAYONG GULLIBLE... MADALING PAIKUTIN ANG ULO!!!

Healthy, sugar-free breads

WALTER, THE BRAND THAT PROVIDES wholesome and delicious breads, introduces yet another nutritious product—Sugar-Free Wheat Bread. This new offering is a follow-up to the Sugar-Free Wheat Pandesal. These tasty whole-wheat fares are the first, authentic sugar-free breads. They are low in calories, cholesterol-free, and give high amounts of vitamins and fiber.

Walter Sugar-Free Wheat Bread and Sugar-Free Wheat Pandesal are ideal for health-conscious individuals, especially diabetics.

Managing diabetes requires a meal plan low in calories (a measure of food energy) to help you improve your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol. If these are unmanaged, they may lead to other complications such as cardiovascular ailments.

The American Diabetes Society said crucial to meal planning for diabetics is eating the right type of carbohydrates. Consuming complex carbohydrates, such as starches and whole grains, are highly recommended because they are low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.

Walter Sugar-Free Wheat Bread and Sugar-Free Wheat Pandesal, while containing absolutely no sugar, are still tasty, soft and moist. As such, these innovative wheat breads will fit delectably into your daily diet.

The secrets behind the appetizing taste of Walter's sugar-free wheat breads are isomalt, used as sugar replacer, and Sunnet or acesulfame potassium, which is used as sweetener. Isomalt is low in caloric value, while Sunnet is completely non-caloric but is almost 200 times sweeter than sucrose.

What's more, Walter Sugar-Free Wheat Bread and Sugar-Free Wheat Pandesal are loaded with fiber from premium quality whole wheat, a form of complex carbohydrate which helps keep sugar levels in the blood relatively stable. Fiber is not broken down by the body and passes the digestive system virtually unchanged so it doesn't contribute calories and has no negative effect on your blood sugar count. Fiber in general is good for everyone because it supports various bodily functions and plays an important role in maintaining the body's health.

NEW!
Sugar Free
Wheat Bread
Love Life
Go Light!

WALTER Sugar-Free Wheat Bread

The Sugar-Free Wheat Bread and Sugar-Free Wheat Pandesal are part of Walter's Health Nutrition line, an array of great-tasting nutritious bread products aimed to help consumers eat and live healthy. Walter Bread also offers Double-Fiber Wheat Bread, a soft and moist wheat bread fortified with a unique combination of soluble fruit fiber derived from apples and insoluble fiber sourced from whole-wheat grain.

Walter's Health Nutrition line is available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

Fast-food favorites in new dine-in ware

JOLLIBEE RECENTLY launched its new specially designed dine-in platters, tumblers and utensils in 80 stores around the country.

Now, everyone can enjoy their favorite *langhap-sarap* products even more as they are served in sturdy platters that come in refreshing Jollibee colors.

Launching the new ware in 80 stores is just the first step. The goal is to have these wares available in all our stores by next year.

With tens of thousands of plated meals, such as Chicken-joy, Burger Steak, Jolly Spaghetti and Palabok Fiesta served every day, the change to washable dine-in ware will not only enhance the experience of loyal Jollibee patrons, it is also expected to help preserve the environment.

There are definitely many reasons to try the new specially designed dine-in ware in your favorite Jollibee store today. Find out for yourself just how much more *langhap-sarap* your favorite Jollibee food can be.

JOLLIBEE'S new specially designed dine-in platters

In time for Christmas, treats as gifts

From page D1

lowing the recipe. Even though the whole process takes one month, it is well worth the wait.

¾ c raisins
¾ c dried cranberries
¾ c dried blueberries
¾ c dries cherries
½ c dried apricots
¼ c candied ginger
Zest from 1 lemon
Zest from 1 orange
1 c rum
1 ¼ c apple juice
½ c butter
1 c sugar
2 large eggs
1 c all-purpose flour
1 c whole-wheat flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
¼ tsp ground cloves
½ tsp ground allspice
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 ½ tsp salt
½ c coarsely chopped pecans
Brandy to taste

Mix raisins, dried fruits, candied ginger, lemon and orange zests, and rum. Soak overnight.

The next day, stir apple juice, butter and sugar into the fruit and rum mixture. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool.

Add eggs and set aside.

In a bowl, mix together the all-purpose flour, whole-wheat flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, salt and pecans.

Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix until just combined. There will be some lumps but that is ok. Do not overmix.

Pour batter into a 5" x 9" x 2 ½" loaf pan. Bake for one hour and test for doneness. If wet crumbs adhere to the skewer, return cake to oven and bake an additional five minutes. Retest for doneness in five-minute intervals until skewer comes out clean.

Set pan on a cooling rack and sprinkle with brandy.

After cake is completely cooled, sprinkle with brandy again and wrap first with plastic wrap then with aluminum foil. The cake may now be served. The cake improves, however, with aging and the addition of more brandy.

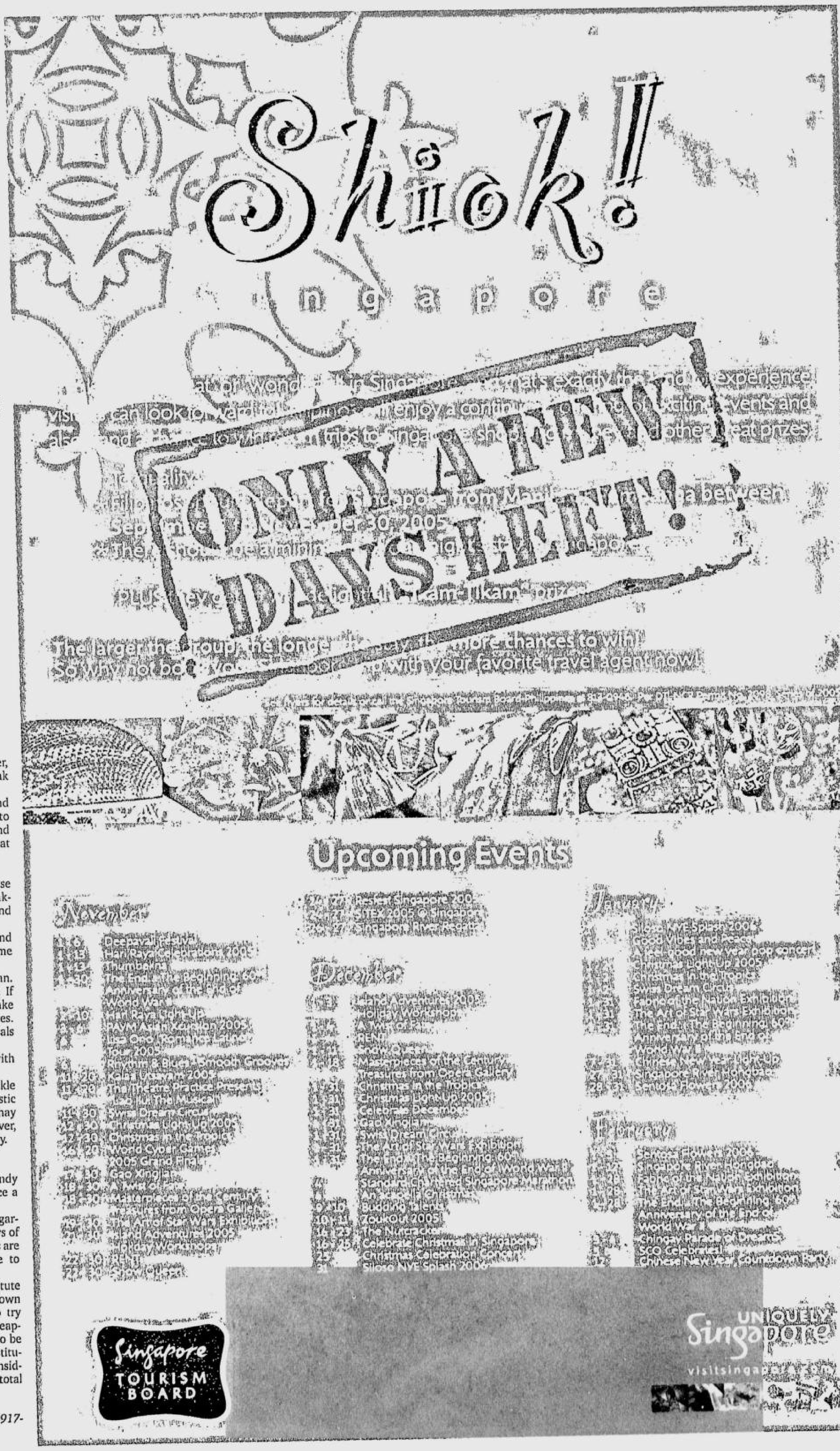
To age the fruitcake

Unwrap the cake and sprinkle with brandy every other day for two weeks, then once a week for the next two weeks.

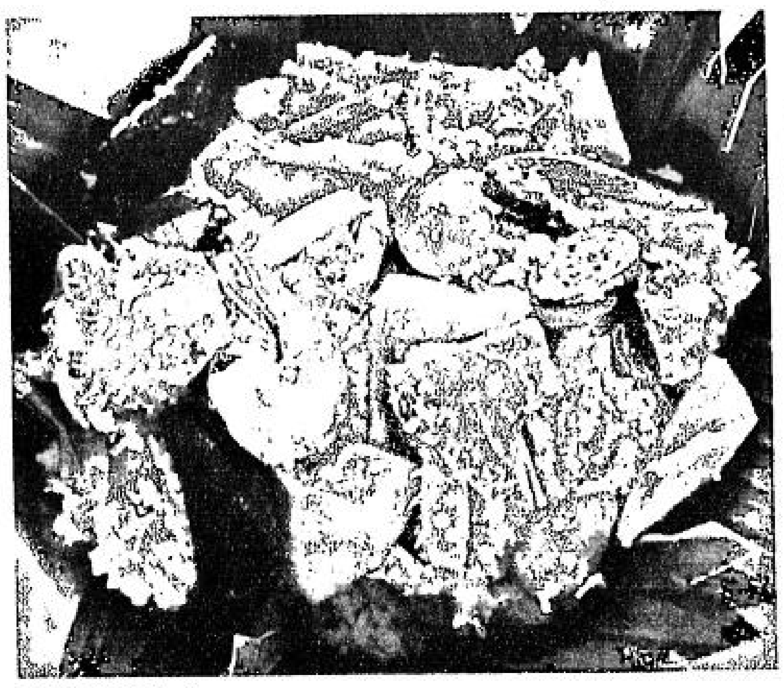
When giving this fruitcake as a gift, I garnish the top of the finished cake with rows of the dried fruits used in the cake. The fruits are then brushed with strained marmalade to form an attractive glaze.

To make this recipe your own, substitute any or all of the fruits with those of your own choice. For example, you might like to try dried mango, dried papaya and dried pineapple for a tropical flair. Coconut could also be added and *pili* nuts would be a good substitution for the pecans. The main thing to consider when substituting is to maintain the total volume of fruit at 3½ cups.

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-8399888.



CABALEN buffet


SEAFOOD Paella

MORCON with sauce

Dining means sharing at eat-all-you-can resto

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON is in giving and sharing no matter what we are going through. This is the reason Cabalen, the "eat-all-you can, eat-all-you-want" restaurant, continues to hold its annual fundraising activity called "Cabalen Para Sa Kabataan."

This is the ninth year that Cabalen is setting aside a percentage of every centavo generated during the entire month of December to put into a fund that provides for the needs of poor students in public schools. Beneficiaries have included less-privileged children in Pampanga, Malabon and Pasig City public schools.

The actual gift-giving is set every February.

Cabalen invites everyone to celebrate their Christmas party and other functions by dining at any Cabalen restaurant. The more frequent you eat at Cabalen this holiday season, the more you are able to share your blessings with poor children.

Specialties for the month of December include Beef Morcon, Seafoods Paella, Cabalen Morcon, Rellenong Bangus, Buco Pandan Salad, Hot Native Chocolate and Bico. Other favorite specialty dishes served year round include Kare Kare, Kalderetang Baka,Alimasag sa Gata, Bangus Belly Steak, Sisig and Bulalo.

Cabalen also offers a wide array of homemade Pinoy Deli products, such as Taba ng Talangka, Ginisang Bagoong, Sweet Chili Sauce, Atcharang Papaya, Sasa and Sugar Cane Vinegar, Tuyo Gourmet and many more. Pinoy Deli comes in P300 and P500 gift packs ideal for Christmas giveaway. You can also create your own Pinoy deli baskets.

Cabalen Restaurants are located at 67 West Avenue, QC; SM City North Edsa, SM Megamall; Robinsons Place Ermita; Glorietta 3; SM City Manila; Robinsons Starmills, San Fernando, Pampanga; Brickroad Area Sta Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta; and the Village Square Harrison Plaza.

For catering needs, call 4219220/ 9135522.

Brazilian cooking classes

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF Culinary Arts is offering the following classes: Nov. 18—Pinoy Thanksgiving (all-new)—Foie Gras Molo Soup, Butter and Herb Infused Lechong Pavo and Liempo with Ube Risotto, Candied Kalabasa and Sauces, Pastillas Bread Pudding

Nov. 19—Brazilian Barbecue: Mixed Barbecue—Pork, Beef, Chicken, Sausage, Etc. Marinated Brazilian Style, traditional sauce and condiments. A uniquely wonderful dining experience.

Nov. 21—A Spiked Christmas—Wasabi (all-new)—Cream Stir-Fried Shrimp in Wasabi Butter, Wasabi Fried Rice, Delicious Roast Wasabi Chicken, Sea Bass with Wasabi Oil, Beef Roast with Sweet Wasabi Crust

Nov. 23—My Rendition of Famous Foie Gras Recipes (all-new)—Foie Gras Burger, Lobster and Foie Gras Salad, Duck Prosciutto and Foie Gras Salad, Foie Gras Tart with Wine Sauce, Foie Gras Pasta

Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162 or 0917-8399888.

A bucket of fun eating

CHICKEN MCDO IS NOW AVAILABLE IN conveniently packed buckets of five and 10 pieces.

Whether you are having a meal with your family or having fun with the *barkada*, grab a bucket of Chicken McDo—P225 for five pieces and P440 for 10.

Turn lunch time and overtime into an instant celebration with a bucket of safe, tasty and freshly cooked Chicken McDo.

Or grab a Chicken McDo bucket and share McDonald's crispy and juicy chicken with your kids and the rest of the family.

With buckets of five or 10, there will be enough Chicken McDo to go around.

The sturdy plastic bucket is reusable and comes in different collectible designs.

Double Midnight Madness SALE

UP TO 70% OFF

November 18 and 19: Up to 12 midnight

November 20: Extended Sale during mall hours

Enjoy these Double Midnight Madness Special Offers:

- Free PARKING TICKETS
  Free parking for four (4) hours for a minimum single receipt worth P1,000 dated November 18 - 19, 2005.
- "Take Nestea Lite & Win What Fits you Right!"
  For every P100 single food purchase with 16oz. NESTEA Lite at Food Choices, get a chance to win instant prizes, an Ipod Shuffle, shopping spree at Nike worth P10,000 and an all expense paid trip for two to Shangri-la Mactan with complimentary massage (3days, 2-nights). Promo runs from November 1 - December 31, 2005.
  Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 27008, Series of 2005.
- Free MOVIE TICKETS
  Buy 1 Take 1 cinema tickets on the last full show screening at Glorietta 1 & 4 from November 18 - 20, 2005 (excluding Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire).
- Free GAMES
  Pay P100 for a load of P200 and get two (2) Yellow Swiper games for FREE from November 18 - 20, 2005 at Timezone. Valid at Glorietta 3 & 4 and Greenbelt 3.

For special rates, call these participating hotels:
Hotel InterContinental [illegible]
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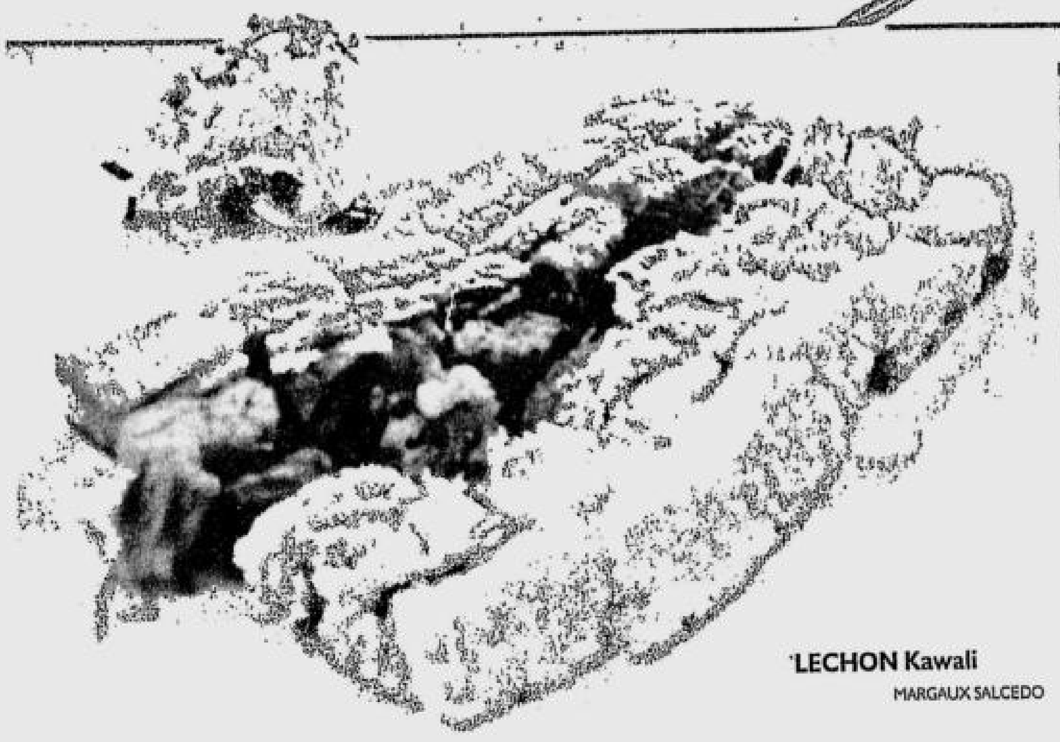
No.1 Japanese Ramen House celebrates [illegible]



LECHON Kawali

MARGAUX SALCEDO

THE GRILL'S spic and span interiors

MARGAUX SALCEDO

Tagaytay's new pit stop

By Margaux Salcedo
Contributor

THE GRILL IS THE LATEST project of chef Tonyboy Escalante of Antonio's Fine Dining fame.

But, unlike the posh Antonio's, The Grill (tel. 046-4134847). aims to be a pit stop for the many travelers to, or passing through, Tagaytay City. It is laid-back, relaxed, casual, cool. It suggests a fun Saturday morning with friends and family.

You see the bright-red sign just before S tarbucks on the main road. There's ample space for parking beside the structure that resembles a big white den. If you take a seat on the patio, you have a good view of the volcano.

The menu is simple, served in large proportions, and Pinoy. Not frou frou Filipino but downright home-cooked dishes you would enjoy off the grill. Hence, the name.

The chef having been raised in Bacolod, the specialty of the house is the Chicken Inasal. It's almost like Bacolod's own, and not surprisingly as most of the cooks are from Bacolod.

Add this to Escalante's penchant for quality and you have *manok* to die for. All the chickens are chilled, never frozen, ensuring freshness and a more tender and juicy outcome.

While waiting for the Inasal, you can munch on Chicharon Bulaklak, which has a great bite and just the right amount of crisp.

If you can't decide on your main meal, Escalante's favorites, aside from the Inasal, are the Barbecue Spareribs or the Pata Tim. My palate was drawn to the Binayabas na Salmon. Sinigang, our version of bouillabaisse, is one of my favorite Filipino dishes and it is great to find a place that offers variations of the traditional recipe: *sinigang sa sampalok*, *sinigang sa bayabas* and *sinigang sa mangga*. Then you have the choice of having it cooked using fish, i.e. salmon or *bangus*, brisket or vegetables.

I am a fan of *binayabas* because it has a shy, almost sweet, hint of sour, and the irony in its bite is as refreshing as it is invigorating. In Bulacan, where I come from, we use what I call baby *bayabas*—petite guavas that are more sour when ripe. Escalante uses bigger, more ripe fruits that are less sour but this doesn't lessen the experience of enjoying the nourishing *sinigang*.

CHICKEN Inasal

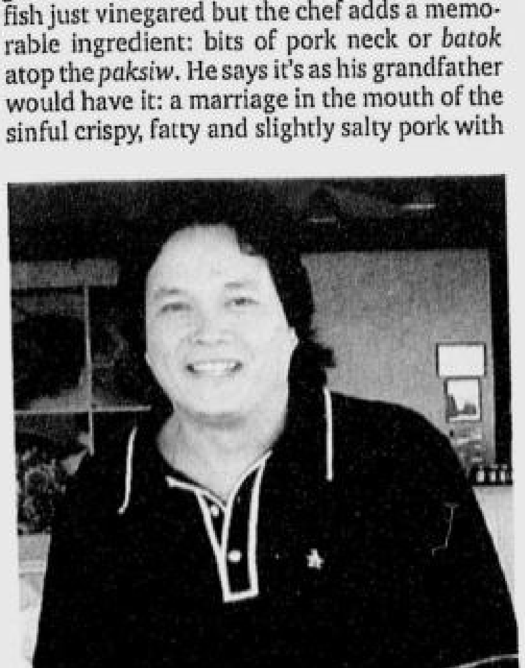
Memorable ingredient

Another must-have is the *paksiw na bangus*. It would have been enough to have the fish just vinegared but the chef adds a memorable ingredient: bits of pork neck or *batok* atop the *paksiw*. He says it's as his grandfather would have it: a marriage in the mouth of the sinful crispy, fatty and slightly salty pork with the innocent vinegared fish. I don't exaggerate when I say it may be the best thing that could ever happen to you.

If you happen to come around in the afternoon, try their *dinuguan* with *puto* for *merienda*. Now there is *dinuguan* that you may find even in fast-food chains, and there's real *dinuguan* that takes an expert to create. Good *dinuguan* should have enough vinegar to give it bite. In Filipino, you can probably say, "*sumisipa ang asim*." The Grill's *dinuguan* has this quality.

That's why you shouldn't have the *dinuguan* with another specialty of the house, Ginger Shake. This Ginger Shake (think frosted *salabat*—sounds queer but it's very refreshing!) is an experience on its own. But when you have it with vinegared delicacies, it keeps the sour taste in your mouth an extra

TAGAYTAY'S/ E4



CHEF Tonyboy Escalante

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Rai Rai Ken ラーメン®
Ramen House & Sushi Bar

Celebrating 15 years
Of the Country's #1 Japanese Ramen Hous

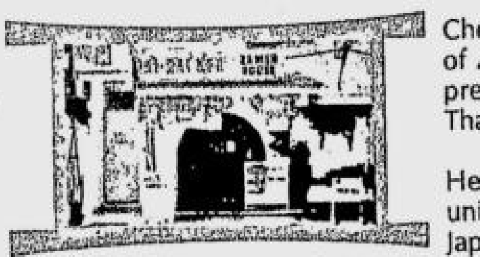
Mouth-watering foods daily sourced fresh and cooked in age-revered Japanese tradition, a meticulous chef who mastered the craft, a young and dynamic manager with a vision… put them all together, and what would you have? You'd have the best foodhouse satisfying even the most discriminating taste.

Indeed, Rai Rai Ken (also affectionately called, RRK) has proved to be the best casual Japanese foodhouse in the country, with 29 branches in Metro Manila and most key areas of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, with at least six more outlets opening this year!

With a banquet of its superb ramen, sushi, bento, sashimi and other specialties, Rai Rai Ken celebrates its 15th year. It's truly a celebration of great foods, and of great life!

MODEST BEGINNINGS

RRK's bountiful celebration is its way of appreciating every step of its fruitful journey from modest beginnings. Rai Rai Ken (which plainly means "restaurant" in Japanese) started as a simple small teahouse in 1990 in Bautista Street, Makati City.


First Rai Rai Ken branch in 'Kamagong Makati

FROM KITCHEN TO BOARDROOM
Benjie Garcia
President and CEO/ Head Chef

It was a humble yet dream venture by Benjamin Garcia, a gentle worker who started out as kitchen help in a Japanese restaurant many years earlier. Through honest work and perseverance to learn, he ultimately became the restaurant's head chef.

He personally took care of every detail of preparation of Rai Rai Ken's menu. He would even directly source the guaranteed quality and fresh raw materials and ingredients, stressing that "their freshness is our priority."

JOEY GARCIA AND JOAN GARCIA-DOTULLO. *Second generation Garcia's making the business recipe more palatable*

Most of all, he made sure that Rai Rai Ken produced its own ramen noodles, sauce, and everything that made up their menu.

The Garcia family members supported him in every step of the way.

"I still frequently see my Dad the President of Rai Rai Ken - tinkering in the kitchen, experimenting and coming up with brilliant recipes for a new dish to be added to our list of bestsellers!"

THE RIGHT PEOPLE, THE RIGHT MOVES

Chef Benjie's dream evolved with his intensive learning of Asian culinary arts from his years of experience in preparing foods for various restaurants in Japan and Thailand.

He utilized this learning to come up with RRK's own, unique menu, yet basically founded on the tradition of Japanese preparation and cooking.

Complementing this has been the genius of his son, equally dynamic Joey who presently leads the business development of Rai Rai Ken as its very young manager, and of Joey's sister, Joanne Garcia-Dotullo who handles finance and the operations in Manila

They've been helped along the way by strategic advice from InAsia, led by Marketing and Management Consultant Tim Capellan, who is Joey's former college mentor.

Joey and Joanne spearheaded the transformation of Rai Rai Ken from its initial simple, traditional and rigid setup, to its current dynamic character as a modern, cool, casual place for all.

"My Dad personally attends to details of our food preparation that our customers have loved in RRK these 15 years," says Joey, "Even up to now, he personally develops the menu that we offer to our customers, and I still frequently see my Dad – the President of Rai Rai Ken – tinkering in the kitchen, experimenting and coming up with brilliant recipes for a new dish to be added to our list of bestsellers!"

Reverence to tradition is also intact, as the colors yellow, golden yellow and red dominate the makeup of every Rai Ran Ken restaurant.

"Yellow and red, in Japanese tradition, are signs of respect. red cloths placed on doorways cause you to bow your head before entering. Complementing the yellows are red and gold colors that add to the welcoming store ambiance" explains Joey.

PRODUCT SUPREMACY
Chefs in a huddle for another exciting recipe

IRASHAI MASE!
Delicious food in a welcoming and friendly ambience

GREAT LEAPS

From its small beginnings as the Bautista Street tea house back in 1990, Rai Rai Ken constantly re-engineered through Mr. Garcia's leadership and vision to become what it is now – the country's number one casual Japanese Ramen restaurant, with an ever-widening and developing menu, and a fast-expanding chain of outlets.

By 1999, Rai Rai Ken conquered Cebu, where many dared to put up foodshops, yet failed. RRK easily became Cebu's number one chain of japanese restaurants, and it now has six outlets in Cebu City, headed by Benjie's sister, Angelina Garcia Palmario.

RRK likewise became the number one chain in Mindanao with its opening of branches in Davao City and Cagayan de Oro City.

The RRK network has indeed grown fast on nationwide scale, with a goal of opening three to four new branches every quarter.

SUSHI, TEA, AND COMPANY.
Great Dining experience at Rai Rai K

PLEASING EVERYBODY

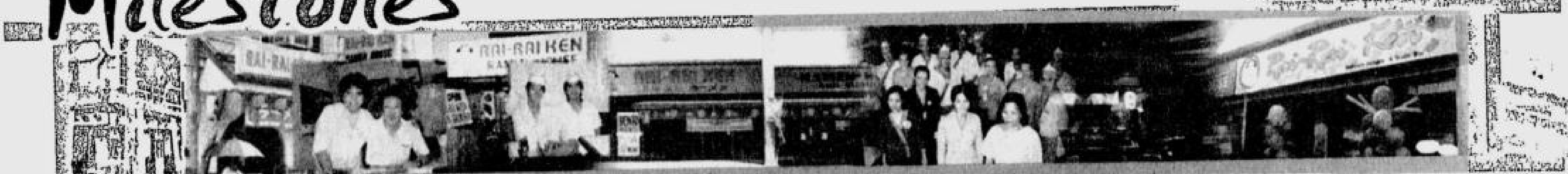
The cliché, " You can't please everybody" doesn't hold true for Rai Rai Ken; because in fact, it pleases everybody – from the discriminating food connoisseur, to the general passionate diners, and even the first-timers that just want to try out on the Japanese menu.

"Rai Rai Ken offers authentic Japanese cuisine at its finest! Try out their gyoza. It's really good! They offer the leanest magoru sashimi, sukiyaki, prawn and mixed tempura and beef teppanyaki. … The ambience is good too."

That's one testimony from a Japanese tourist who posted his assessment of Rai Rai Ken on worldsurface.com, a leading internet site for tourists and travelers.

This tourist is just one of the many Japanese nationals who frequent the place (their patronizing of a restaurant, by the way, is regarded as evidence of the place's serving authentic Japanese food and their satisfaction with it).

Milestones



1990 •Benjamin Garcia puts up the first Rai Rai Ken store as a modest teahouse in Bautista Street, Makati;

1994 •RRK opens second restaurant in Kamagong Street also in Makati.
Then, also within that year, the third outlet opened in EDSA, Pasay City.

1995 •Rai-Rai Ken aggressively promotes its franchising scheme, opening this year, its first franchise outlet in Greenhills San Juan, and then a second one, in Paranaque City.

1999 •Rai Rai Ken ventures into operation in the provinces, choosing for its first provincial endeavor, to meet the discriminating tastes in the "Queen City of the South", Cebu. In just a short time from that provincial venture, RRK becomes the number one chain of Japanese restaurants in Visayas as well as in Mindanao.

2000 •RRK takes on the aggressive mission to expand nationwide, with a goal of opening three to four new branches every year.

2001 •RRK comes up with new logo and store design

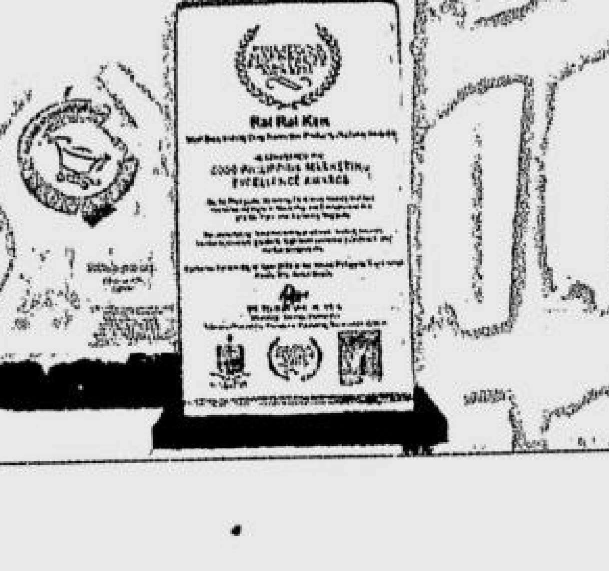
2004 •RRK wins Philippine Marketing Excellence Award in the Food Business category, besting 105 other restaurants;

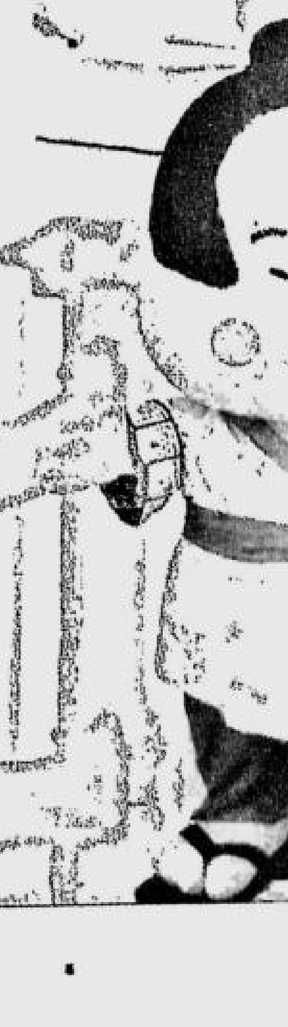
2005 •RRK wins -#1 Casual Fine Dining Japanese Restaurant- National Shoppers Choice Awards and Best Japanese Restaurant- National Products Quality Excellence Awards 2005 (Metro Cebu)

• The Philippine Marketing Excellence Award 2005 - Most Outstanding Casual Dinning Japanese Restaurant (National Award)

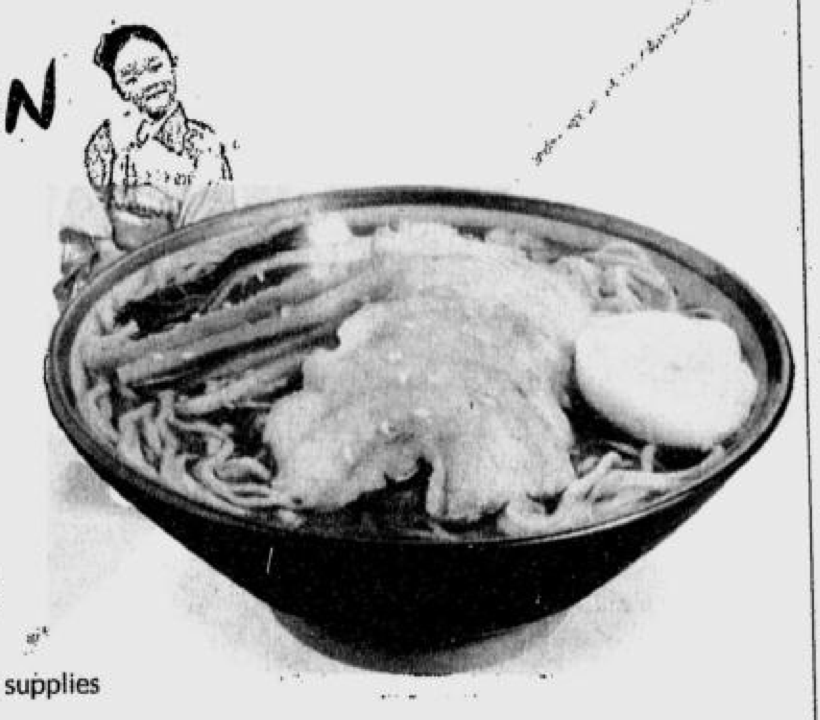
•RRK celebrates 15 years in the business and reaches 29 branches, and the network still expands!

Moving Forward.
The Garcia's innovating
and revolutionizing Japanese dining in the Philippines





RICH RAMEN TRADITION



It's not just noodles, nor just soup.

Noodles and soup may indeed be nice stuffs found in an ordinary ramen dish, but there should be a whole lot more, and a whole lot better, of everything!

At Rai Rai Ken, we serve ramen at its complete best.

First, the Noodles. Rai Rai Ken produces its own ramen noodles from selected raw material and ingredients. These noodles are carefully prepared with much attention to details, as to the control of temperature, exactness of moisture, and the peak conditions of ingredients themselves.

They're excitingly bouncy that you get with them a feeling of a surge of energy into your body. After all, they're indeed full of energy and zest.

Rai Rai Ken's noodles have thus become very popular that it even supplies them to other fine dining restaurants

Next, the Broth. Much attention and care goes with the preparation of the soup or broth of Rai Rai Ken's ramen.

It involves a detailed process – soft simmering, perfecting its blend with the noodles (not too much, not too little; but just the right effect on the taste and firmness of the noodles), and then seasoning it in a mix of special sauce.

That's how Rai Rai Ken makes its ramen broth full-bodied.

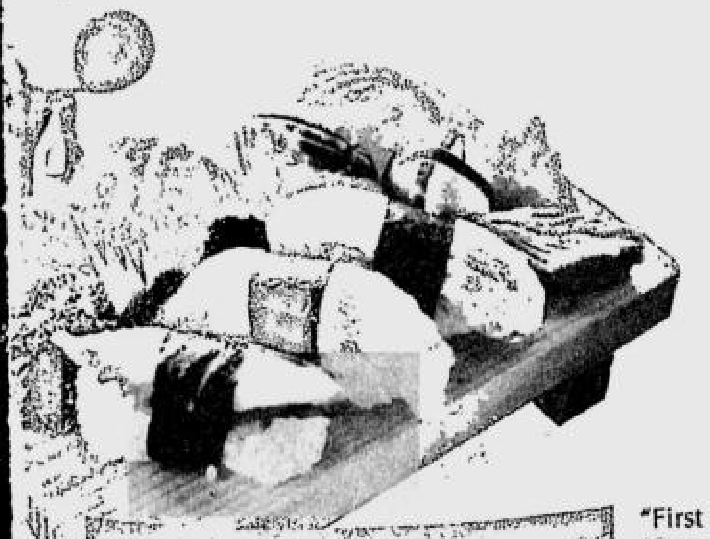
And now, the Toppings. In Japan, chefs get well known by the exotic toppings they come up with on the ramen they serve.

At Rai Rai Ken, the toppings are the choicest there could be.

Just see the enviable satisfaction of customers who take their ramen with toppings of ground meat and shrimp in special bean sauce and garlics-and-chilis-surround, or the vegetables-and-seafoods combine – all cooked from bare freshness.

Rai Rai Ken ramen is indeed widely known for its romantic, mouth-watering toppings.

It's the complete dish very much enjoyed in its own richness, or in combination with another dish. It's Rai Rai Ken ramen, the best ramen in the land.



PLEASED FRANCHISE OWNERS, TOO

"First of all, I love the food. I frequented Rai Rai Ken in Tomas Morato (Quezon City) and enjoyed its dishes so much that I wanted to share the experience with my friends and with as many people as I could. So, in 1990, I put up my own Rai Rai Ken franchise outlet, and I cherish this decision."

This is the testimony of Mr. Nathan Atienza, owner of Rai Rai Ken's first franchise outlet in Greenhills, which later moved up in SM Megamall in 1995.

Greatly pleased, Mr. Atienza also in the same year opened his second RRK franchise, in Robinson's Manila.

This year 2005, the 16th franchise outlet of Rai Rai Ken opened in SM Iloilo, owned by Mr. Jerry Sy.

Mr. Sy narrates, "I knew early on that putting up a Rai Rai Ken outlet would be a great venture. I've been witness to the lining up of their customers. I, myself, was one of their many regular customers in Cebu who really enjoyed their foods!"

"I know I made the right move to open my own outlet in SM Iloilo," shares Mr. Sy.

Today, Rai Rai Ken operates 29 branches conveniently located in major malls and key commercial areas all over the Philippines

Luzon

- Harrison Plaza Village Square - Mabini corner Vito Cruz Malate Manila
- EDSA Pasay - # 282 Unit 5 & 6 Dona Generosa Bldg. EDSA Ext, Pasay City
- Galleria - 4th level, Robinsons Galleria, Ortigas Complex
- Glorietta Makati - Glorietta 2, Restaurant Row, Makati City
- Robinsons Sta Rosa - 2nd floor, Robinsons Place, Sta Rosa, Laguna
- Harbour View - Harbour Square, CCP Complex Pasay City
- Robinsons Ermita - 4th level, Robinsons Place Ermita Manila
- SM Megamall - Bldg B Basement SM Megamall Mandaluyong City
- Malvar - Gen Malvar St. Malate Manila
- Paseo de Magallanes - 1012 San Antonio St, Oakridge Plaza, Magallanes Village, Makati
- Tagaytay Magallanes Square - Magallanes Drive corner Aguinaldo, Tagaytay City
- Shell Mamplasan - North Bound, South Luzon Expressway, Shell Mamplasan
- SM Lucena - Ground floor SM Lucena
- Alabang- Alabang Zapote Road
- SM Baguio - 3rd level Baguio City
- * SM San Lazaro- 2nd Level SM City San Lazaro Manila
- * SM Sucat- 2nd Level SM Sucat Paranaque
- * Pasong Tamo Makati- Ground Floor DMCI Bldg Pasong Tamo Makati
- * Pampanga

Visayas

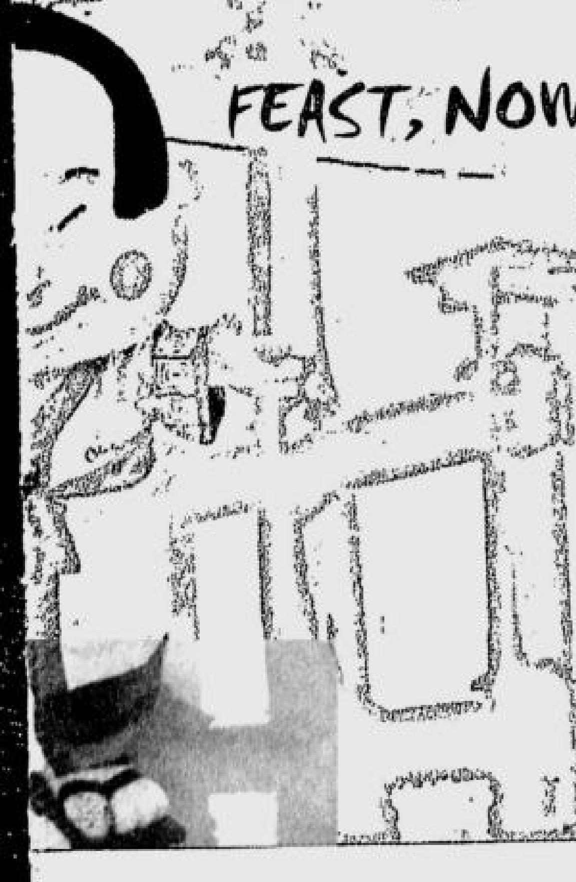
- Mactan - Albenson's Bldg unit 4, 5, and 6., Pusok, Mactan City
- Robinsons Cebu - Lower Ground Floor, Robinsons Place Cebu City
- SM Cebu - 2nd Level Cebu City
- Banilad Town Center- AS Fortuna Street Cebu City
- Ayala Center- 3rd Floor Ayala Center Cebu
- SM Iloilo - Upper Ground floor, SM City Iloilo
- Bohol - Upperground floor, Island City Mall, Dampas District, Tagbilaran City, Bohol
- *Bacolod - Lacson Avenue Bacolod City

Mindanao

- SM Davao - 2nd Floor near Cinema 1, 2 and 3, SM City Davao
- Lim Ket Kai:- 2nd floor, Lim Ket Kai Mall Center, CDO City

* Opening this year

FEAST, NOW AND IN THE FUTURE



Rai Rai Ken Ramen House and Sushi Bar, through hands-on management and dynamic leadership, has indeed earned its rightful place in the food business industry as one of the country's best restaurants.

Those 15 years, from its modest beginnings to its dynamic prominence today speak of a very fruitful journey – for the Garcia family, the staff and officials, the franchise owners, and most of all, for the satisfied diners.

Want now to franchise? Call up Franchise and Business Developement Dept. at:

(632)536-5002 Manila
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It's indeed a cause for celebration!
Come and celebrate the feast with Rai Rai Ken!

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•ALD Commercial •Bagiuo Mktg. •SYSU •Cebu Araw Dist.

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Tagaytay's new pit stop

From page E1

minute longer and you'll have to down a glass of water to sedate the burn. That's what happened to me anyway, so if you decide on the *dinuguan*, I suggest you pick a sweeter fruit to shake up!

Sweet favorites

For dessert, the *leche flan* goes a little overboard in sweetness but the *turron* mixes are a real delight. You may choose from *tikoy* and *langka* (jackfruit); *tikoy* and *ube* jam; or *saging* and *langka*.

Don't make the mistake of skipping The Grill because of Antonio's reputation for chic. The Grill is not fine dining. It's a grillery so come casual and eat with your hands if you like. Even college students can afford this hangout. The prices are more than reasonable. You can have *inasal* for just a P100 and several other choices for less than P500. And the servings are heaping. Plus, the place is impeccably clean.

PAKSIW ***na bangus*** **with pork** ***batok***

I wouldn't consider The Grill just a pit stop. It is worthy as a final destination on its own.

Email the author at smilingfilipino.blogspot.com.

THANKSGIVING tradition lives on in Chef Eli Aurelio's kitchen as he prepares his specialty of 30 years: US roast turkey with corn, chive cream mashed potato, cranberry, giblet gravy sauce and choice of cornbread, meat, oyster, or apple and apricot stuffing. Turkeys are guaranteed to be tender and moist, thanks to sophisticated German ovens that probe temperature at all times and stop cooking at 140 F. Call 7269329, 7217952 or 0920-9201883.

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